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THE BEST DETECTIVE STORY IN THE WORLD

by Clemence Dane

OLD things are best: even old detective stories.

A young friend of mine whose hobby is detective fiction asked me the other day to name my favourite detective story. I began light-heartedly enough:—

"Oh, the *Mr. Fortune* series, or perhaps *Father Brown*."

"Do you think they're better than *Sherlock Holmes* at his best?" my friend pursued. And then of course I had to admit that I had been forgetting *Sherlock Holmes*.

"So you think Doyle is better than Gaboriau?" said she, cornering me again, for I had to admit that I didn't. And with that she went on heading me learnedly back through the years and across the Channel, from Gaboriau to Wilkie Collins, and from Wilkie Collins to Du Boisgobey, and from Du Boisgobey to Poe, always in the right and always making me eat my words, always triumphantly proving to me, for she was modern enough to despise her own literature, that the further you went from the present day and the nearer you got to the eighteenth century, the more admirable life and books appeared. Until I lost my temper. I knew her weak point, though she didn't.

"Of course", I said, "the best detective story in the world is B.C. not A.D. The father of all detectives was Belshazzar."

"Spell it," said she.

I obliged.

"Never heard of him," said she.

"Of course not," said I triumphantly. "It's in a book you youngsters never read nowadays, south of Scotland."

"And what's that?" said she.

"Family Bible with Apocrypha!" said I. "In the Bible he's Daniel."

"Oh, the lion-tamer! I thought we were talking of detective stories."

"We are."

"Go ahead!" said she resignedly.

And so she heard for the first time the story of Susannah, that "delicate woman", very fair, adored by her husband, her children and her servants, and of the trap the elders set for her. The men caught her alone in the garden, and when she screamed for

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help they swore that they had found her with a lover. She was tried, and there being two witnesses against her, she was condemned to death.

As they were taking her to the place of execution, accompanied by her father and mother, her children and her kindred, all weeping, they passed a young man whose name was Daniel. And when he heard her praying to God for help he cried out that he would have no part in a judicial murder. Having thus attracted everyone's attention, he persuaded the judges that they had not sufficiently examined the evidence—in itself a remarkable feat!—and was so eloquent that they permitted him to re-try the case.

Then Daniel, the first of all Counsels for the Defence, examined each witness separately. And like any proper Counsel he first shook the witness's nerve by his manner:—

" 'Oh, thou that art waxen old in wickedness!' "

Then he improved the situation, I'm afraid, by a certain amount of Third Degree:—

" 'Now thy sins which thou hast committed aforetime are come to light.' "

And followed it up by shooting the question:—

" 'Under which tree sawest thou them companying together?' "

Whereupon the flustered witness, who of course had been lying like a trooper and had not seen her under any tree, said hastily:—

" 'Under a mastic tree.' "

Daniel had got what he wanted. Calling up the other, he employed once more much the same methods. But when he asked, " 'Under what tree?' " pat came the answer, " 'Under an holm tree.' "

Thus the innocent blood was saved, and from that day forth Daniel was held in great reputation in the sight of the people.

"That's the story, and if you read the original you read a very lovely tale. But the loveliness doesn't concern us. We are only discussing it from the point of view of detective literature. And from that point of view, isn't it good?"

She hesitated.

"I think you over-praise it. After all it's the mere ground-work of every detective story."

"That's why I praise it. Don't you praise anything done for the first time and never surpassed? For, honestly, the formula never has been surpassed. It has been elaborated, glorified, gilded in every conceivable way, but we still use it. The innocence and beauty of the victim; the helplessness of the friends; the fair trial; the overwhelming evidence; the exact observation of the accused by an onlooker; the private opinion formed which opposes the verdict; the execution held up; the informal re-trial; the cross-examination; the trap; the criminal's inevitable slip; and then the glorious acquittal, and the detective himself 'held in great reputation in sight of the people'. That's the formula, never bettered. The author of *Susannah* knew his job."

"But", said she, rallying, "at that rate, any ancient tale that depends on an observer's acuteness can be handled as a detective story. The thief who looted the treasury of King Rhampsinitus, Morgiana and the Forty Thieves, Solomon and the two mothers. . . ."

"Ah, but all these stories are happenings in which the investigator has some personal interest. Morgiana would be useless outside the household of her master! The son-in-law of King Rhampsinitus thieved no more: and Solomon judged, he didn't investigate. He was the final court of appeal, Sherlock Holmes's elder brother, Myles. No, Daniel was the first of the true detectives, the father of all our creations, shrewd, disinterested,

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kindly, fearless, forever impelled to thrust himself into a difficult situation and straighten out the tangle at whatever risk to himself. The case of Susannah wasn't his only triumph, you know. There was the case of Bel, you remember, and the case of the dragon.

"Bel was a god who had a temple, and every day ate twelve great measures of fine flour and forty sheep and six vessels of wine. One day the King and Daniel had a discussion about Bel and his hunger; for Daniel said that an image of brass couldn't possibly eat, and that the King was being cheated by the priests. Then there was trouble. The priests of Bel wanted Daniel executed for blasphemy; Daniel stuck to his assertion, and the King didn't know which party to punish. So a test was arranged. The priests laid the table for the god and went away, and the King himself sealed the doors till the morning. In the morning they re-opened the doors. Everything was undisturbed; but the food and drink were gone. Then the King cried out:—

" 'Great art thou, O Bel, and with thee is no deceit at all.'

"But Daniel laughed and held the King that he should not go in, and said:—

" 'Behold now the pavement!'

"For Daniel had strewn ashes the night before in the King's presence all over the floor, and in the ashes were footprints of men and women and children. Daniel had deduced the 'secret doors', and so he won his case.

"But Bel was not the only god in Babylon. There was the dragon. What he was history doesn't say—a crocodile, perhaps? Anyway, the Babylonians were certain that he was a god, as great a god as Bel himself. So, when Bel was proved a fraud, King Cyrus fell back on the dragon.

" 'Wilt thou say this also is of brass? Lo—he liveth, he eateth, drinketh: thou canst not say he is no living god.'

"Then Daniel made a pudding of pitch and fat and hair and fed it to the dragon. And when the dragon died of that indigestible meal, once again Daniel had proved his case. . . . And I think", I added, "that I've proved mine!"

"But what about the lion's den?" she asked.

"Ah, that I can't tell you. We are given the facts. But how Daniel kept the lions quiet, how he saved himself, has never been told."

"It seems curious", said she, "that this one case, the best known, the most extraordinary, has no solution."

"Oh, well, there's always Daniel's own explanation," said I.

"What's that?" said she.

"It's too unsophisticated to interest you."

"Go on."

"He said that God helped him."

She looked at me, so puzzled.

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THE NOVELS OF E. M. FORSTER

by Howard N. Doughty, Jr.

E. M. Forster is a novelist of whom Mr. I. A. Richards has said that "at the heart of his work there is less satisfaction with human existence as he sees it than in the work of any living writer". Yet, though often mentioned with respect, and, indeed, having, it is said, a special coterie of admirers, he has received on the whole very little serious attention from critics of modern English literature. There are reasons for this comparative neglect. The principal one can be expressed in a simple fact of chronology: there is a gap of fourteen years between his latest novel, *A Passage to India,* published in 1924, and its predecessor, *Howards End,* published in 1910. As a consequence of this fourteen years' silence, *A Passage to India,* though it had considerable popular success, was read and reviewed almost entirely without relation to its author's earlier work and was generally set down as simply a book on India. Mr. Middleton Murry was almost alone in calling attention to its real significance.

It can also be seen that the particular term of years which intervenes between Mr. Forster's latest novel and the bulk of his work (three novels precede *Howards End*) might mean more as far as the critical estimation of a writer is concerned than almost any two dates that one could have chosen. They do indicate in fact what happened to Mr. Forster—he fell, critically speaking, between two worlds. Most of his work was done when writers like Shaw, Bennett, and Wells were representative of the main tendency of English literature and were the writers about whom criticism polarized; when he reemerged in 1924 that world had disappeared; its great men were discredited; literature and criticism had taken a new direction. Just as Mr. Forster had shared little in the *éclat* of the former age, so he was greeted without obloquy on his reappearance in the later—indeed, as I have said, he has always commanded respect. It is significant, however, that when two of his most ardent admirers in this later age, I. A. Richards and Virginia Woolf, write about him, they should both be mainly concerned with trying to answer the question why he is, comparatively speaking, a failure as a novelist.

That his novels do not "come off" as wholes is true. As Mrs. Woolf says, there is a lack of integration in his work. The three rather diverse strains of fantasy, of realism, and of sociology that compose his talent do not coalesce satisfactorily; on putting down one of his books one is not left with the feeling of a total experience. Sociology breaks the surface of realism, fantasy gets in the way of both. His books, in spite of a thousand careful, perhaps too careful, linkings, are disrupted. They are not, in short, taken individually, complete works of art. But when Mrs. Woolf goes on to suggest that, in effect, Mr. Forster would be a better writer if he devoted himself to unmixed comedy of manners (and a very genuine talent for comedy of manners is a part of his equipment as a realist) one demurs. "Directly he ceases to

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feel responsible for his characters' behaviour and forgets he should solve the problem of the universe", she says, "he is the most diverting of novelists", and singles out for praise Tibby Schlegel, an indeed diverting but minor character in *Howards End* (for whose actions, anyway, Mr. Forster does not disclaim the responsibility). Solving the "problem of the universe" is Mrs. Woolf's way of phrasing what Mr. Richards calls "[lack of] satisfaction with human existence as he sees it". Her sentence may suggest what I mean when I say that Mr. Forster has fallen between two critical worlds. It may also suggest why he is, on the whole, a more interesting novelist than Mrs. Woolf.

One needs to trace a little further Mr. Forster's weaknesses. The lack of integration that Mrs. Woolf indicates is really a failure in technique. Mr. Forster has not succeeded in evolving a formula of technique that would fuse into a single whole his varying approaches. Like most failures in technique, I think this one can be referred to the defect of some quality in the writer's mind. The fault of temperament in Mr. Forster's case is perhaps best illustrated by what he says himself in *Aspects of the Novel* about his own methods as a novelist. He is speaking of what he calls "prophecy"—the quality that makes a book like *Moby Dick*:

> Another prophet, Blake, had no doubt that it [the double vision of prophecy] was right.
>
> ". . . May God us keep
> From single vision and Newton's sleep. . . ."
>
> Few will agree with Blake. Fewer still will agree with Blake's Newton. Most of us will be eclectics to this side or that according to our temperament. The human mind is not a dignified organ, and I do not see how we can exercise it sincerely except through eclecticism. And the only advice I would offer my fellow eclectics is: "Do not be proud of your inconsistency. It is a pity, it is a pity that we should be equipped like this. It is a pity that Man cannot be at the same time impressive and truthful".

This is not a valid generalization. It sums up, however, Mr. Forster's own experience.

Having had to choose between truth and impressiveness, having, like Mr. Fielding in *A Passage to India*, sacrificed passion to clarity, Mr. Forster has paid the penalty—of not having been very impressive. Clarity and truthfulness have, however, their compensations and they have enabled him to make a sociological analysis which is at once a valuable document and in its development through his novels as a whole an admirable work of art. Though of an utterly different temperament, he has a striking similarity of outlook with another writer of sociological tendencies, D. H. Lawrence. Lawrence is a writer who is sometimes both impressive and truthful—it is significant that of all his contemporaries Mr. Forster seems to admire Lawrence most—but he is also often simply impressive. He sacrifices clarity to passion and needs Mr. Forster to complement him. Together, they make a last stand for an individualism, the social and economic conditions necessary to the healthy existence of which they are forced to watch disappear.

II

Mr. Forster starts with the common observation that modern civilization distorts and deforms the life of the individual in all its range. Industrialism, by driving man from the soil, has spoiled his capacity for the naïve life of the body that flourishes in contact with the earth, and the regimentation of democracy has substituted in him a set of automatic responses for the idiosyncrasies of real personality. Pledged as he is to an archaic individualism, Mr. Forster displays, as one might expect, a profound distrust of the machine and of all forms of organization.

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The life of the body is fundamental in Mr. Forster's scheme. A recognition of it is the necessary basis for any healthy self-conscious development of personality (the "life of the spirit", the "inner" life), and it is better to have this alone than any unhealthy or distorted form of the "inner" life. Out of its manifestations in sex and mating, Mr. Forster builds the concept of generation and of continuity of race that has such an important place in his work. As for the life of the spirit, as I have said, Mr. Forster disallows it if it involves a rejection of the life of the body. Furthermore, it is not genuine if it is based on any retreat from reality, a shutting of the eyes, a shrugging of the shoulders. The pursuit of culture as an end in itself, for instance, is for him one of the worst of perversions. Finally, as a real "inner" life, it postulates an "outer" life, that is, a world of action, a society of which it must not only be aware but in which it must have some stake, from which, to be healthy, it must not feel itself totally cut off. One can see that Mr. Forster's demands on the life of the spirit are to the last degree exigent. He will accept no substitutes for what he regards as the real thing—and the keenness of his ability to detect substitutes is uncanny.

Thus in his first novel, *Where Angels Fear to Tread,* he displays in the progress of Philip Herriton two of the most common false attitudes to which an attempt to lead the life of the spirit in the modern world can bring one —aestheticism and indifference. The book is patterned round the relations of Philip and Miss Abbott—Miss Abbott, who had been the travelling companion in Italy of Philip's widowed sister-in-law, Lilia, at the time of Lilia's marriage to the son of a small-town Italian dentist. This fiasco in the Herriton clan has had the effect on Philip of consolidating further the disillusion that usually follows on the petering out of a bright boy's adolescent revolt: his militancy turns to cynicism and he takes refuge in the ivory tower. Thus he explains matters one day to Miss Abbott, whose unreliable conduct in Italy was caused, he finds, by the fact that she too had had a moment of revolt against Sawston (the Herriton suburb), a moment which she now bitterly regrets. Sawston she feels was right; Lilia's marriage is turning out very badly indeed. She shouldn't be discouraged, Philip tells her:—

"Society *is* invincible—to a certain degree. But your real life is your own and nothing can prevent your criticizing and despising mediocrity—nothing can stop your retreating into splendour and beauty—into the thoughts and beliefs that make the real life—the real you."

"I have never had that experience yet. Surely I and my life must be where I live."

Evidently she had the usual feminine incapacity for grasping philosophy. . . .

Similarly, when the parties re-assemble in Monteriano in a mass attack on Gino for the possession of the child he has had by Lilia, now dead, Miss Abbott is again a step ahead of Philip. They both have succumbed once more to Monteriano—but with a difference. Philip has become the disinterested spectator, amusedly watching himself carrying on the futile negotiations that his fanatic, fighting sister Harriet keeps him to. Miss Abbott, however, has taken sides.

". . . To fail honourably! To come out of the thing as well as you can! Is that all you are after? . . . Do you want the child to stop with his father, who loves him and will bring him up badly, or do you want him to come to Sawston, where no one loves him, but where he will be brought up well? There is the question put dispassionately enough even for you. Settle it. Settle which side you'll fight on. But don't go talking about an 'honourable failure'. . . ."

"Because I understand the position of Signor Carella and of you, it's no reason that—"

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"None at all. Fight as if you think us wrong. Oh, what's the use of your fair-mindedness if you can't decide for yourself? Anyone gets hold of you and makes you do what they want. And you see through them and laugh at them and do it. . . ."

"You are wonderful!" he said gravely.

"Oh, you appreciate me!" she burst out again. "I wish you didn't. You appreciate us all—see good in all of us. And all the time you are dead—dead—dead."

After the catastrophe precipitated by fighting Harriet's attempt to kidnap the baby, the bonds of Philip's spirit break. In his remorse he sees something portentous in Miss Abbott's rightness. Her magnificence to himself and to Gino makes her seem to him an ideal, a goddess-like incarnation of pity and courage. He undergoes a sort of conversion and his life is re-oriented. But good as this is for Philip, it is based on a fundamental unreality, and going home on the train he has to learn a final lesson. Miss Abbott is not the incarnation of an abstract pity and courage. His misunderstanding forces her at last to a recognition and revelation of what has been unconsciously the mainspring of all her actions—that she too, like Lilia, had loved Gino, had desired him physically.

In his next book, *The Longest Journey,* Mr. Forster has studied another type of unhealthiness in personality. He here deals with one of Philip's states of mind, his moment of idealization, as a fixed trait of character: Rickie Elliot, the hero of *The Longest Journey*, is a chronic, a hopeless idealist; just as physically he is congenitally lame, so morally he is essentially tainted—he cannot see things as they are without adding to them. That Mr. Forster has drawn Rickie as an exceedingly attractive and likable character and has made of his story a pathetic one, only gives added impressiveness to the climax of the book, the judgement pronounced upon Rickie and all his kind by the voice of his mother in a dream the night of his first disillusionment: "Let them die out—let them die out". Rickie's mother, whom he has idolized, is long since dead and he does not know the import of her words, but because of her peculiar importance in the book, she speaks as a prophetess. She is the first of the mystic mothers that haunt Mr. Forster's work—earth-mothers, portentous, half-mythical figures, who embody his concept of continuity, of an essential race-life. Just as she turned away to a farmer-lover from Rickie's father, an egotistical dilettante, the worst of the Elliot kind, so in the dream she rejects Rickie, the gentle idealist, the best of the Elliot kind. Her bastard, Stephen Wonham, is her true issue; it is to him that the words Rickie hears are spoken, "Come away—never mind—let them die out—let them die out".

Stephen is the earth-mother's choice for the basic type that shall replace the tainted Elliots and inherit the world from which they sprang. It is this that makes him the most interesting of the foils or antitypes that appear in Mr. Forster's early novels. Gino, the Italian, belongs to the past; the Emerson pair, in *A Room with a View*, are escaped refugees from Sawston; Stephen on the other hand is a new creation, a pure type belonging literally to another world. In one sense he is unreal because, in order to have a free hand in drawing him, Mr. Forster has put him in as complete a social vacuum as possible. As Mrs. Elliot's son, however, as the substance of things hoped for, he has strange verisimilitude. His traits—his health and physicality, his lack of false sentiment, his directness of thought and action, his complete realism, the whole make-up of his character even to the atheistic materialism (from the pamphlets of Colonel Ingersoll and others) that he adopts out of hand as his philosophy—are

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prophetic. One thinks of that post-War parody of him, the Hemingway "hard guy"; one thinks also of certain types adumbrated in Soviet literature.

With Stephen's personality Mr. Forster's divining stops. It is significant that Stephen finally settles down to farming, the most individualistic and isolated of all occupations. In the right kind of a world he is not, as Mr. Forster has drawn him, unimaginable in a factory as well as on a farm. The construction of such a world, however, is beyond Mr. Forster's scope. He put his trust in the earth-mother. She, apparently some day will suddenly begin to "throw" a new race, Stephens will come by some unpredictable spontaneous twist in generation like the mutation of sports to species in biology. Mr. Forster has further dealings with the earth-mother in *Howards End* and *A Passage to India.*

In *A Room with a View*, Mr. Forster returns to the theme that he had treated in the story of Miss Abbott. *A Room with a View* is the simplest and least complicated of his novels. Yet in spite of the smallness of its scale he has so arranged its pattern that it probably gives a truer estimate of the social forces in play about the issue it translates into terms of character and situation than any novel of its time dealing with that issue —the "emancipation" of women. One has but to compare it, for instance, with H. G. Wells's *Ann Veronica*, which was published a year later, resembles it in theme, and, in fact, duplicates (badly) one of its characters. Mr. Forster is aware of the reach of his problem; Mr. Wells sees only the immediate foreground. Mr. Forster has a philosophy; Mr. Wells lives, philosophically speaking, from hand to mouth. Though one is conscious on every page of *Ann Veronica* of the controversy that gave it birth, and, after twenty-three years, one realizes only with a start that *A Room with a View* was born of the same controversy, the difference between them is exactly the difference between a good sociological novel and a bad one.

III

By the exigence and sureness of what one might call his taste in personality, Mr. Forster has avoided accepting any of the false attitudes or unhealthy states of mind that masquerade as personality in modern society. On the other hand his insight into the essentials of personality has kept him from the mistake of regarding it as a free, autochthonous growth. He feels with an extraordinary sensitivity the multiform and complex ways in which society tends to mould the individual, and so can gauge to the last decimal its force and pressure at any given point. This awareness of Mr. Forster's to the dual nature of personality forces him to confront a question which has been making itself more and more insistently felt through his earlier books—the question of whether there is any possibility at all of a healthy individual life in modern society. Personality is enfeebled by withdrawals or escapes from society, yet what can it feed on in contemporary society that will not poison it?

In his fourth novel, *Howards End,* Mr. Forster gathers the threads of his work together and faces this question directly. In order to do so he has had to make a grouping in the persons of his characters of the central forces that make up capitalist society; in his particular arrangement and manipulation of these forces he has summed up accurately their position and direction during the period before the War, when the novel was written. It is this that gives *Howards End* its documentary value. It is, however, a true interpretation, not a hit-or-miss exploitation of current issues to make a timely book.

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Its genuine insight and the skill with which Mr. Forster has distilled a whole society into the lives and situations of his characters are what give it its value as a work of art.

The two heroines of *Howards End*, Helen and Margaret Schlegel, are characteristic products of the pre-War bourgeois intelligentsia. One finds them in their late twenties, the flower of an upper middle-class background of comfort, enlightenment, and culture; interested in "causes", socially sensitive, believing intensely in the "inner life", and yet, in spite of the vitality and responsiveness —so important in his scheme of things—that Mr. Forster attempts to endow them with, they already display symptoms of the futility that was to become more and more the hallmark of their class and type.

Their search for reality brings them in contact with the Wilcoxes, with Mr. Henry Wilcox, in whose person is distilled the race of imperialist business men, super-Babbitts, effective in action but incapable in thought of any mental connections beyond the necessities of the immediate job to be done. Helen, the more impulsive of the two sisters, rejects the Wilcoxes *in toto* after one experience. Their imperviousness to the order of ideas which she and Margaret represent, she instinctively feels, is absolute. Margaret herself is not so sure. She is conscious of an inadequacy in the "inner" life she has so sedulously cultivated. She feels that there is a reality about the Wilcoxes lacking in her own world. She cannot dismiss as irrelevant their practicality, their ability to get things done, the Empire that they have built. "More and more do I refuse to draw my income and sneer at those who guarantee it", she says to the expostulating Helen. So, since she likes Mr. Wilcox as a man, Margaret accepts him when, tired of his widowerhood and in a muddled way genuinely fond of her, he asks her to marry him. She knows what she is taking on. She has had proofs enough that the concept of personality and its implications for living mean nothing to him. She has also learned in another connection—in the affair of Leonard Bast—that the blindness of which this blindness to personality is a part has implications and consequences reaching far beyond the field of personal relationships. She hopes, however, by patience and by playing the game according to his rules, to succeed at last in making him see and understand. Confident in her knowledge of him and of herself, she goes ahead. "If insight were sufficient, if the inner life were the whole of life their happiness had been assured." It would mar the reality of Mr. Forster's analysis to follow Margaret's attempt to its final shipwreck. In this picture of a hopeful member of the intelligentsia taking up with a representative of Capital and trying to make it over, he has given in essence the history of pre-War "reform".

It is over the city clerk, Leonard Bast, symbol to Mr. Forster of what democracy and the machine have done to a once upstanding yeomanry, that the shipwreck occurs. Leonard has the same rôle in *Howards End* as Gino and Stephen Wonham and the Emersons in the earlier books, with the difference that he is not separated from modern society in various ways as they are, but is a part of it, bone of its bone, a cog in the machine, what Stephen Wonham might be if Society were allowed to claim him. The Wilcox world, having given him the vote, has washed its hands of him. The Schlegel world, more conscious of his plight, have felt that his soul at least must be free and have tried to redeem him with education, *their* education. The result, of course, is a mock-culture, the double dilution of a spiritual stream already running thin itself. Experience soon teaches Leonard

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the unreality for him of this class-culture. "Miss Schlegel, the real thing's money and all the rest is a dream." Helen (and Mr. Forster) can only play with a dubious metaphysics for answer.

Under the wash of half-digested books, under the lineaments and complexes of the city-clerk, the basic Stephen has not been altogether crushed out of Leonard. Helen and Margaret perceive this, and, appalled at what they and the Wilcoxes have unconsciously collaborated to make of him, they try to set things straight. Their efforts drive Leonard himself from bad to worse and finally to his death.

But in the pessimism that creeps up through *Howards End* there is one earnest for the future. It is to the impulsive, revolutionary Helen that the care of Leonard particularly falls—Margaret is preoccupied with Mr. Wilcox—and through her Leonard begets a child, a child over whose destiny presides the genius of Mrs. Wilcox. One will have guessed the rôle of Mrs. Wilcox: she is the earth-mother again, an amplified and more portentous version of Mrs. Elliot. She dies early in the story, but it is for her that Helen and Leonard have begotten their child and it is to Howards End (her place) that Helen finally comes with it. Through her, Leonard, the third generation from country forbears, sucked into the city, will in his issue be redeemed from that Hell and cleansed to the essential Stephen. It is on this note the book closes: "The field's out!" Helen cried excitedly—"the big meadow. We've seen to the very end, and it'll be such a crop of hay as never!" Hay is a crop antipathetic to the Wilcoxes; they can't go near it, it gives them hay-fever. The Howards have ended, the earth-mother has been bearing Wilcoxes; but some sudden turn in generation will come and a new crop will dominate.

Mr. Forster's confidence in the untutored workings of the earth-mother is not so sure, however, as the ending of the book would indicate. There is another passage on the same theme in a significantly different key:

> "All the same, London's creeping. . . . And London is only a part of something else, I'm afraid. Life's going to be melted down, all over the world."
>
> Margaret knew that her sister spoke truly. Howards End, Oniton, the Purbeck Downs, the Oderberge, were all survivals, and the melting-pot was being prepared for them. Logically they had no right to be alive. One's hope was in the weakness of logic. Were they possibly the earth beating time?
>
> "Because a thing is going strong now, it need not go strong for ever," she said. ". . . All the signs are against it now but I can't help hoping, and very early in the morning in the garden I feel that our house is the future as well as the past."

One does not feel much confidence in any hopes for the future nourished by this feeble nostalgia. The idea on which Mr. Forster lavishes all his gifts of poetic evocation, to embody which he creates with considerable travail of the imagination symbolical figures like Mrs Wilcox, is an idea that fundamentally can give him no more compelling assurance than one finds in Margaret's words. He wishes to make convincing a sentiment which his heart sets great store by, but his honesty forces him to set down how unconvincing it is to his intelligence. It is this not very forcible conflict of heart and head over one of its central ideas that is the flaw in *Howards End* as a novel. It explains why the note sounds forced in the purple passages, why the book in spite of its finish seems artistically incomplete. As I have said, it was of himself that Mr. Forster was speaking, when he said that "Man cannot at the same time be impressive and truthful".

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IV

A Passage to India, published in 1924, whatever it may be as an interpretation of India, is in essence an epilogue to *Howards End*. In the disillusion of Mrs. Moore and Mr. Fielding, Mr. Forster has written a finis to everything Mrs. Wilcox and the Schlegels stood for. Mr. Fielding's reflections as he watches the Marabar hills at sunset are a quiet epitaph on the Schlegels' "inner life".

> . . . He felt dubious and discontented suddenly, and wondered whether he was really and truly successful as a human being. After forty years' experience, he had learned to manage his life on advanced European lines, had developed his personality, explored his limitations, controlled his passions—and had done it all without becoming either pedantic or worldly. A creditable achievement, but as the moment passed, he felt he ought to have been working at something else the whole time—he didn't know what. . . .

Similarly Mrs. Moore's experience in the heart of the same Marabar hills that Mr. Fielding watches from a distance sums up what has happened during the momentous fourteen years since *Howards End* was written to the earth-mother and the hopes Mr. Forster centered in her. One must consult the book for all he says of the echo in the Marabar caves and its effect on Mrs. Moore. The import is clear. She (and Mr. Forster with her) pass into "the twilight of the double vision", the limbo where "everything exists and nothing has value", where "we can neither act nor refrain from action, . . . neither ignore nor respect infinity"—into Mr. Bloom's Dublin and the Waste Land, in short. The frail dyke of "Howards End, Oniton, the Purbeck Downs, the Oderberge" has crumbled away. The earth-mother's milk is soured and her womb diseased.

I have spoken of the similar tenor of ideas in Mr. Forster and in D. H. Lawrence. If Mr. Forster is the weaker writer, he is also more clear-headed; if *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is distorted in emphasis and hysterical, the sum of Mr. Forster's work rounds out its statement with a quiet finality. The ideas and feelings with which both writers deal are not uncommon ones. They run the gamut of every protest that outraged individualism makes against the society which Frankenstein-like it has created. Their insight into what genuine personality is, however, and their refusal to put up with make-shifts, to accept any attempt at a reintegration of personality of which health and wholeness are not the fundamental conditions, is not common and is what gives point to the despair, quiet or frenzied, on which their work finally abuts. They would seem to have demonstrated the impossibility of any restoration of the individual along the classic lines of anarchic individualism; it is beyond the individual's power to adjust solely from within the balance between himself and society on which unwarped personality depends.

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WORKING FOR JAMES GORDON BENNETT

by Edward Dean Sullivan

IN TWENTY-FIVE years of work on New York and Chicago newspapers I have never known a newspaper office which compared in interest, spirit, ethics, and comfort with the old New York *Herald* under James Gordon Bennett, the younger. It was no rag, it was a silk purse—getting empty.

The younger Bennett was seventy when I joined the *Herald*, and there had been no sign of improvement in his notably quick temper. It was the consensus of the staff that he daily grew more irritable, erratic, and personally fabulous. Reporters who had never worked on the *Herald* were of the opinion that the nervous strain must be terrific, due to Commodore Bennett's hysterical—and often publicized—outbursts and staff penalties. The fact was that he was no more dangerous than lightning. He struck only occasionally and usually beaned the wrong person. Those who should have been fired were comparatively safe.

Ruling the paper with an iron hand, except when in pyjamas for long cruises, he provided a zest and a gamble which was seldom encountered in other city rooms. The second thought of everyone employed on the sheet was always what the Commodore would think of the story in hand and how he would want it handled. First, one had the story proper to think about and construct; second, the attitude of the old man, especially if persons of social prominence were involved; and third, nearly two thousand "don'ts" which were a feature of the *Herald*.

The *Herald* "don'ts" were famous throughout newspaperdom. You could not say "wharf", the word was "pier". People did not live "on" a street, they lived "in" a street, et cetera, et cetera, two thousand times. What with having to consider libel, facts, don'ts, the Old Man's viewpoint and the approaching "deadline", many a young writer sat paralyzed before his early Herald stories.

But there was a staff unity and loyalty which I never found elsewhere in a newspaper office. The staff had that community of interest which people living around Vesuvius probably develop. And the fact was that the "Old Man" was personally very popular—thanks somewhat, I suppose, to his good judgement in staying abroad. Then, too, he had a habit of fooling everybody through storming at gnats and readily gargling camels.

The first time I ever saw him was in 1913 on one of his historic visits to his office in the Herald Building. He was seventy years old, but both his figure and face belied it. His face was at least a hundred and his figure would compare with that of almost any tall lad of twenty. These visits, sometimes after years of absence abroad, were particularly nerve-racking to the men in positions of responsibility on the *Herald*. Editors, useless or important, thronged the building. Those who had been placed there by Bennett personally usually did nothing and thus had nothing to fear. But those who actually ran the paper and directed its policies (with

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one eye on the cables) had reason to fear the consequences of these personal conferences with the Old Man. Usually they were anxious to save a $10,000 to $25,000 job, for which they were entirely qualified, by utilizing every agility for three or six dangerous days. Needless to say, the building strained like a balky horse with the arrival of the Great Man for these periods of trial. No one could possibly guess what he would do about anything whatever, so that much of the uneasiness which his presence caused was groundless. However, it existed; and it was amazing to see the strange, worn appearance of usually genial men around the Herald Building while the great shadow was upon it. When he finally went away—and never in my time did he do anything drastic—his popularity fairly boomed again.

Actually there was less fear of Bennett than there was a feeling of uneasiness because of measureless uncertainty. Let me illustrate. On one of his visits, when the entire personnel of the *Herald* was taut with anticipation, he came up the great stairs and did not turn into his office, which through the years was kept ready in daily expectation of his arrival. On this occasion he walked slowly down the long corridor known as Brain Alley in the old Herald Building. On either side were the offices of the various departments of the paper—financial, sporting, cable, society, et cetera. As he strolled along with his small bowler at a rakish angle and his trousers creased down the sides, as he customarily wore them, a great silence settled on the tipped-off offices. All except the society department! Out of it a messenger boy came running at top speed. He collided with Mr. Bennett and sent him sprawling, hat, stick, and gloves. Bennett was up in a moment, seizing the alarmed boy by the coat lapels.

"What the devil's the matter with you?" gasped the aged Bennett, glaring.

"I'm running an errand," said the kid.

Bennett held onto him, half needing the support and breathing heavily.

"Well," he said finally, "that's the way to run 'em." And he gave the boy a five-dollar gold piece.

On the occasion of his visit to the paper in 1913, his purpose was to look over the old presses which, long an object of interest to passers-by on the Broadway side of the glass-enclosed Herald Building, were now entirely obsolete. It was the rumour in the editorial rooms that the presses were held together with shoe-laces and that a flywheel might be expected through Macy's show-window almost any day. For several years the Old Man had balked at replacing this costly machinery, but now he had at least been induced to take a look at it.

You may be sure that the foreman of the press room had it polished to the last bolt to indicate that it suffered from age alone. Further, he arranged—since he had not the slightest notion what the Old Man might like—to have the entire press-room staff on hand in new white jumpers for the formal Bennett review.

The low built press-room was approached down a circular iron stairway. Just before the word was received that Mr. Bennett was starting downstairs, one of the workmen, slightly under the influence of liquor, came racing to the lockers. He quickly put on the white suit awaiting him but lost his balance and fell down, soiling the suit and his face. As he hurried down the iron stairs to the line-up below there was no chance of getting rid of him. Old Man Bennett appeared at the top of the stairs. The fact was that the Old Man had had a few himself. He came down the stairs unsteadily. He walked with

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a slight and graceful stagger around the printing plant and declared without further ado that it was good for years to come, perhaps forever. Then he stood in the circle of men and observed them one by one.

"Who is that?" he asked suddenly, staring at the printer who had fallen down. He was informed. Taking a twenty-dollar gold piece from his pocket he gave it to the mildly intoxicated printer.

"You're the only one", explained the Old Man, "who looks as if he did any work around here."

I had two personal experiences which affect the legend of the merciless Bennett, one involving a compliment and the other a lucky escape. In 1916 I was assigned to take a trial trip in a giant Caproni bombing plane, equipped with three Liberty motors and Fiat adjustments. I had never before been in a plane, and this trip was an especially noteworthy one for the reason that the plane carried eight men—all newspaper writers—the largest passenger group carried up to that time. It was a nervous proceeding, especially when the engines halted and the plane swooped down fifteen hundred feet over New York Bay. That and other alarms contributed to make an exciting story.

Since I knew nothing of technical aeronautics I simply wrote a graphic story of which direction I had originally sat in and what happened thereafter. I spoke of looking down past a wire at my side and seeing the map of Long Island. When this disappeared and the sun was visible down beside the same wire I looked up in the air and *there* was the map of Long Island.

Immediately there was a cable inquiry from Mr. Bennett regarding the story. He had long been interested in matters aeronautical, offering prizes for balloon flights, et cetera, and as was usual in such cases, I was confidentially discharged until further word was received from the Old Man. If he were indignant my dismissal from the newspaper had already occurred, if he were pleased my dismissal was promptly rescinded.

In this instance he was pleased. He had read the story and had become air-sick. I was given a bonus.

On another occasion I wrote a story which involved the Duchess of Marlborough. Mr. Bennett's obsession regarding accuracy was important enough, but moreover in this instance one of his best friends was involved. In writing the head for the story, late at night, I managed to make a vital error—"Countess of Marlborough".

I was called to the office the first thing in the morning to find the Managing Editor strolling up and down, talking to himself with gestures. I remember his words:—

"There are certain names, such as Jesus Christ, George Washington, and Abraham Lincoln which I believe are known to everyone. Did you ever hear of the Countess of Marlborough?"

I was promptly though secretly discharged, but the article never came to Mr. Bennett's attention and I continued for years to work on the paper, untouched by the alarming legend of his daily reading every syllable in the *Herald's* columns.

Aside from the "don'ts" on the *Herald* there were more than two hundred persons prominent in New York whose names were to be mentioned in no circumstance whatever—people who had in one way or another irritated the Old Man. Sometimes it seemed that all of the two hundred were present at the same function. Once at a great civic conference I recall that the reporter on the story said there were sixty persons present and that the only two who could be mentioned were Colonel Roosevelt and Jacob Riis.

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This expurgation of noted names had to be watched in more ways than one. Writers who were paid by space for their work must be careful not to waste time writing the advance obituary of one of these Bennett enemies who was decreed already dead.

Speaking of obituaries, they were among the most pleasant factors in the making of money on the *Herald*. Regular staff space men were given eight dollars a day as a guarantee and were paid at space rates of eight dollars a column for material beyond the guarantee. Aside from Sunday stories for the mail or magazine sections one of the most ready means of making extra money was to write advance obituary notices of important persons during idle time at the office.

For example, while interviewing a man of prominence you might notice that he was slightly jaundiced, or coughing hard. You might be informed that he was going away for his health, fearing a complete breakdown. You not only wrote the interview, but at the first opportunity, his obituary also, to be held for use. The result was that very often the death of a prominent citizen meant a most prosperous week for a reporter who had not been looking forward to extra money.

One of the most amusing instances I recall on the *Herald* in this connection was brought about by the death of Pope Leo XIII. A powerful-voiced rewrite man whom we shall call Dick Diamond had been writing the obituary of this very active churchman on and off for many years. He had it practically up-to-date and it involved about $350.

Herald salaries were paid on Thursday, and Tuesday was the last day space payments for the current week were counted in. The Pope was stricken late Monday night. If Dick Diamond was to get this unexpected windfall during that week the pontiff must pass on before 2 A.M. Tuesday.

When the copy boy came into the city desk with the cable news announcing the Pope's sudden illness the whole office congratulated Dick. At half-hour intervals new bulletins arrived. The Pope was sinking. The Vatican family was called. The Pope's death was momentarily expected. Dick was pleased but nervous. Then came the last bulletin at 1:45. The Pope rallies.

The single four-letter expletive of that rewrite man eclipses anything I have ever known for unintentional abuse. In reality he considered the churchman, about whom he had written pages, a kindly and vital character.

But to return to the care with which names must be used in the *Herald*. There was the amusing occasion on which a mix-up occurred concerning the persons attending a grand social function and those attending a minor prize fight. The social function was a ball given by Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish, unquestioned social arbiter of the day (1908). Naturally, Mrs. Fish was stunned to read in the *Herald* that a hundred gamblers, ward heelers, and other persons with round haircuts were among her guests. She refused the apology of Gardiner G. Howland, then Managing Editor of the *Herald*, and for years the *Herald* barred all mention of Mrs. Fish or her functions.

Anyone at all familiar with the *Herald* in its years under the direction of the younger Bennett will recall the interest in dogs reflected in the columns of the newspaper. Mr. Bennett was a fanatical lover of dogs. Literally no type of story made a greater appeal to him than one showing the intelligence, bravery, loyalty, or cleverness of a dog. Those persons who torment the world

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with their narratives of the virtues of their hound found ready listeners in all *Herald* men. It was sure copy. That being so it may be readily understood that there was panic in the *Herald* office one night in July, 1915, when a tip reached the office that there was a *talking dog* on the East Side.

Now it might be explained in this connection that newspapermen located at Police Headquarters and other adjacent news points in the Ghetto were slow to move into the heart of the district in midsummer. It was not very pleasant, means of transportation were few and poor, stories were in the main not vitally important, and the reporters through various means leaned more and more upon "tipsters". For example, one of the noisiest types of stories likely to occur on the East Side involved a tenement with ptomaine. Some slow-moving Italian vessel would come into port with spaghetti sauce ready to explode in its can. These goods would be offered at greatly reduced prices and presently a whole tenement or a whole street would be screaming with pain. It would sound like the end of the world, but as a matter of fact it would be nothing more serious than a neighbourhood stomach-ache.

In such cases, and in other instances where perfunctory questioning would soon explain the situation sufficiently, it was the custom of newspapermen to call the nearest druggist, undertaker, or cigar dealer in the vicinity. The owner of the store called would be informed that he was being called by the Coroner, Borough of Manhattan, City of New York. He would be ordered to go immediately to the address mentioned in the story, ask the following questions, and be back at his telephone for further questioning within half an hour. Usually he obeyed, saving the reporters a long and unpleasant journey. Subsequently, in cooler weather, the reporter would get around to see the layman thus used, would buy him some cigars, give him a couple of dollars, or in some way get his good will and explain that he had really been working for a newspaper that night. Furthermore, the reporter would leave his name and address or telephone number and suggest that he would be willing to pay for any tips sent him on news in the neighbourhood. The druggist, undertaker, or storekeeper was then a tipster. If they were good they were paid regularly.

After a few tips, most of them became inventive. If they lived far enough over on the East Side to be beyond the borders of easy verification, their lies became very tall indeed. The furthest one over I ever knew was a fellow we shall call Manuel Schwartz. How he could lie! He had regular stories that popped on regular calendar dates. The story of the man who spent the winter in a barn, coming out in the spring with five overcoats on him and blinking in the light. The one about the fellow who lost his temper in the barber shop and, half-shaved, ran down Grand Street in pursuit of someone. Every newspaperman who knew Manuel knew that he simply never told the truth about anything, including his home address.

It was Manuel who reported the talking dog to the dog-ridden *Herald*, *via* Police Headquarters.

Stationed at Police Headquarters was Harry O'Donnell, a most conscientious *Herald* reporter. When Manuel reported the talking dog O'Donnell heckled him, but Manuel insisted that he had heard the dog talk fluently. The owner was a Mr. Ginsberg and he lived so close to the East River that he might well be swimming on this sweltering night. O'Donnell, in a rage, merely called the office, said abruptly that he was on the trail of a talking dog, and started on

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his long and unpleasant trip. He determined to show Manuel up once for all.

It took nearly two hours to reach the address of the talking dog.

"Is Mr. Ginsberg here?" asked the perspiring reporter.

"He has been", said a neighbour, "but he took his dog and went over to the Grand Street ferry." Another long walk.

"Is that the dog that talks?" asked O'Donnell.

"Yeah," said the neighbour, "he was talkin' here jus' tonight."

O'Donnell looked at the neighbour a long time. Then he started on the great hike to the Grand Street ferry. There was no other way to reach there; cabs were not to be seen on the East Side waterfront in 1915.

At the Grand Street ferry O'Donnell learned that Mr. Ginsberg had been there for quite a while. He had started home half an hour before. It was midnight, but O'Donnell started right back for Ginsberg's home, arriving after one o'clock.

There in front of the Ginsberg home was a small, bald-headed man seated at the curb, which is the porch of most East Side tenements. Beside him lay a small fox terrier.

The man, O'Donnell learned, was indeed Mr. Ginsberg.

"I understand", said the thoroughly exhausted reporter, "that you have a talking dog."

Mr. Ginsberg pointed at the indifferent little animal.

"It's him," he said carelessly. "His name is America."

"Would you mind having him say something?" asked O'Donnell.

"About what?" asked Ginsberg.

"Just anything," said O'Donnell, "just some remark off-hand. A song, maybe."

"America," said Ginsberg, addressing the dog, "when I'm too old to work, what'll you do?"

The dog barked twice.

"What'll he do?" asked O'Donnell.

"He says he'll work *for* me," said Ginsberg.

O'Donnell looked at the dog without even thinking.

"How old is he, anyway?" he asked.

Ginsberg turned to the dog.

"How old are you, America?" he inquired.

The dog barked twice.

"How old?" asked O'Donnell, dazedly.

"Four years old," said Ginsberg.

"Thanks," said O'Donnell and began the long walk back to Police Headquarters.

It was three o'clock when he called the *Herald* Desk.

"The story of the talking dog," he said.

"My God," said the night City Editor, "we had given you up. What about it? Did you find the dog?"

"I found him," said O'Donnell.

"Did he speak?" shouted the night City Editor.

"Yes, I heard and talked with him," said O'Donnell.

"Wait a minute," howled the night City Editor, "we'll have to make over on this. This is a sensation. I'll put you onto a man."

"Just a minute," said O'Donnell. "I couldn't understand anything that dog said."

"Why not, why not?" bellowed the night City Editor. "What *are* you talking about! Who can understand him, then?"

"Manuel Schwartz can," said O'Donnell, "because he's a son-of-a-bitch."

Aside from the dog-story mania the younger Bennett had other news foibles such as anti-vivisection, protection of migratory birds, and a never-failing interest in exploration. In addition his paper was the most comprehensive maritime paper in America.

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For years a great newspaper, the *Herald* began to stagger financially with the coming of the World War. Bennett had squandered about $35,000,000 during his period of ownership, and with the coming of war and the vast expenditures this entailed, he found himself crippled. In the *Herald* offices in 1917 amazement developed as costs were constantly cut—in every detail—where money had never before been an object.

In his *Forty Odd Years in the Literary Shop* James L. Ford tells of a *Herald* representative who returned from Paris and reported the great change in the Commodore which was to be reflected in the dying paper.

"He's dead", explained the returning veteran of the *Herald*, "the old, bibulous, money-squandering Jim Bennett is dead. In his place there is a Scotch miser."

Slowly from this point the great old *Herald* began sinking at the bow, until in January 1920 it was sold to that hoarder of extinct journals, Frank A. Munsey, for four million dollars.

Thus ended the legend that the *Herald* would be willed to those veteran employees who had pleased the Commodore most in all the years when he seemed displeased.

Circumstance had so bound the prodigal Bennett that even the "home" which he willed to *Herald* employees and other journalists exists only on paper. If it were designed to provide half the comfort, happiness, interest, and enthusiasm that distinguished the old *Herald* city room it would be worth more money than ever passed through the long free fingers of the temperamental Commodore.

THE MAN WHO WAS FRIDAY

TRACING DEFOE'S SECOND MOST FAMOUS CHARACTER TO HIS SOURCE

by Willard Hallam Bonner

DANIEL DEFOE was once considered merely a good liar. He lied so captivatingly, it was said, that the world warmly received his prose romances and immortalized his heroes and heroines. But like so many other worthies of the pen, he has stood the barrage of scholarship, so that now he stands before us rather as a master of parquetry, ingeniously piecing together in new designs bits from everywhere. He was not a journalist in vain. His observations, his experience, his reading—everything was grist for his mill. Of late years his reading in particular has drawn the attention of students. He was, it seems, like Chaucer and Coleridge, a voracious, insatiable reader. He let little escape, and he used freely what he wanted. His pen, sharpened by the warfare of pamphlets and journals addressed to lethargic common folk, stung into life the most matter-of-fact records, the prosiest accounts. Bare travel works in his library took on flesh in his romances of the sea.

Thus the cold eye of the scholar, turned upon *Robinson Crusoe*, has gazed through the strange surprising adventures of the York

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mariner and has perceived sources in accounts of travel. Alexander Selkirk, once the sole original of Robinson Crusoe, now shares his honours with a half dozen other figures both in and out of books. The great folio collections of Hakluyt and Purchas, as well as more popular contemporary travel-classics, freely yielded of their substance to supply material for the pious peregrinations of Robinson Crusoe three-quarters of the way around the globe. All of this, though it distress the romantic appreciators of the mighty, diminishes no whit our interest in the genius of Daniel Defoe.

Among contemporary books, Defoe was particularly fond of William Dampier's *Voyages*. Now Captain Dampier was in his day as famous and as glamorous a character as Alexander Selkirk himself. In fact, he was Selkirk's celebrated associate. He commanded the wayward expedition that left Selkirk on Juan Fernandez, and he was a distinguished member of the expedition that rescued him. He spoke for Selkirk's character and seamanship to Captain Woodes Rogers, the brilliant commander of the rescuers. Dampier was generally known as the best informed and the most experienced English mariner alive. It was a real accomplishment in the early decades of the eighteenth century to be a veteran of all the seas not frozen, to have circumnavigated the globe three times, to have written the most extensive and informing account of the winds and tides of the world, to have become to the Spaniards of Peru the most feared Englishman in the South Seas, and for daring exploits in general but particularly for doughty deeds exploring the then unknown coasts of Australia to have been presented to the Queen. Dampier went to dinner with John Evelyn and Samuel Pepys, maps stuffed in his pockets, and they were impressed by the surprising modesty and charm of manner of their buccaneer guest.

From 1697 to 1709 Dampier wrote down and published in four volumes a part of his varied experiences. The first volume, which made him immediately famous, ran through many editions, the sixth appearing just two years before *Robinson Crusoe*. Defoe must have known it almost by heart, if we may judge from his generous borrowings.

One of the most interesting of these appropriations concerns Man Friday. In that fascinating first volume of Dampier, called *A New Voyage Round the World*, there is an account of another man marooned on Alexander Selkirk's island. He was a Mosquito Indian named Will. Dampier's account of him and of his rescue, in Chapter IV, runs in part as follows:—

March the 22nd, 1684, we came in sight of the Island, and the next day got in and anchored in a Bay at the South end of the Island, in 25 fathom Water, not two Cables lengths from the shore. We presently got out our Canoa, and went ashore to seek for a Moskito Indian, whom we left here when we were chased hence by 3 Spanish Ships in the year 1681. . . .

This Indian lived here alone above three years, and altho' he was several times sought by the Spaniards, who knew he was left on the Island, yet they could never find him. He was in the Woods, hunting for Goats, when Capt. Watlin drew off his Men, and the Ship was under sail before he came back to shore. He had with him his Gun and a Knife, with a small Horn of Powder, and a few Shot; which being spent, he contrived a way by notching his Knife, to saw the Barrel of his Gun into small Pieces, wherewith he made Harpoons, Lances, Hooks and a long Knife; heating the pieces first in the fire, which he struck with his Gun-flint, and a piece of the Barrel of his Gun, which he had hardened; having learnt to do that among the English. The hot pieces of Iron he would hammer out and bend as he pleased with Stones,

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and saw them with his jagged Knife, or grind them to an edge by long labour, and harden them a good temper as there was occasion.

Here are numerous reminders of Robinson Crusoe. And they are followed by still more: how savages hollow out logs for rough canoes with sharp instruments and fire, how Will supplied himself with fish and the flesh of goats by home-made tools, how he had a little hut, a half mile from the sea, lined with goatskins, how his bed was a barbecue of sticks also covered by goatskins, and how he wore only a goatskin when found.

Will, it seems, saw the rescuing ship the day before it anchored, his sharp eyes telling him that it was English. Then in accordance with the solemnity of the occasion he prepared a royal feast of welcome—excellent goat from his mountains and sweet cabbage from his trees. Says Dampier:—

He came then to the Sea side to congratulate our safe Arrival. And when we landed, a Moskito Indian, named Robin, first leap'd ashore, and running to his Brother Moskito Man, threw himself flat on his face at his feet, who helping him up, and embracing him, fell flat with his face on the Ground at Robin's feet, and was by him taken up also. We stood with pleasure to behold the surprize, and tenderness, and solemnity of this interview, which was exceedingly affectionate on both sides; and when their Ceremonies of Civility were over, we also that stood gazing at them drew near, each of us embracing him we had found here. . . . He was named Will, as the other Robin. These were names given them by the English, for they had no Names among themselves; and they take it as a great favour to be named by any of us; and will complain for the want of it . . . saying of themselves they are poor Men, and have no Name.

All who remember their Defoe see here accumulating reminiscences of the desert-island episode in *Robinson Crusoe*. Set the extravagant ecstasies of Friday and his father beside the "exceedingly affectionate" demonstration of Robin and Will, and one knows for certain that the roving eye of Daniel Defoe paused here. Friday, one recalls, went back to England with Crusoe, leaving his father behind on the island. When he returned with Crusoe's shipload of tools and other supplies, it was one of Friday's great moments. Offshore it was he who first sighted human beings on the island. Writes Defoe:—

The fellow, it seems, had better eyes than I, and he points to the hill above my old house; and tho' we lay half a league off, he cries out, we see! we see! yes, we see much men there, and there, and there. I look'd, but I could see no body, no not with a perspective glass.

Then when they land, Friday is first ashore.

I order'd no body to go on shore at first but my self, but there was no keeping Friday in the boat; for the affectionate creature had spy'd his father at a distance, and a good way off of the Spaniards . . . and if they had not let him go on shore, he would have jumped into the sea. He was no sooner on shore than he flew away to his father like an arrow out of a bow. It would have made any man have shed tears in spight of the firmest resolution, to have seen the first transports of this poor fellow's joy when he came to his father; how he embrac'd him, kiss'd him, strok'd his face, took him up in his arms, set him down upon a tree, and lay down by him; then stood and look'd at him . . . then lay down upon the ground, and strok'd his legs . . . and then got up again, and star'd at him.

This went on all the next day. The Spaniards, too, welcomed them lavishly, embracing Robinson Crusoe. "It would be endless", says Defoe, tasting Dampier's words, "to take notice of all the ceremonies and civilities."

Clearly here is an interesting parallel, as striking as that of Selkirk and Crusoe. Robin and Will, Mosquito Indians in Dampier, have become Man Friday and his father in

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Defoe. The affectionate greeting has merely been enlarged upon by Defoe, and the effect of it upon hardened spectators emphasized, as in Dampier.

Friday has many of the general characteristics of the "Moskito Man", such as extraordinary eyesight, great valour, expertness with a rifle, and absolute fidelity to Englishmen—all of which Defoe had read in the most considerable travel work of the time. In fact, no other contemporary account of this Indian is so detailed in these matters as Dampier's. Neither is there any so sympathetic. There Defoe learned that the Mosquitoes were a small native Central American tribe inhabiting the eastern coast where Honduras and Nicaragua now come together, and that they had in common a hatred for the Spanish. They often sailed with Englishmen, especially the buccaneers, who naturally found use for them in their enterprises. They were such good hunters and fishermen that it was "very rare to find Privateers destitute of one or more of them". They were "tall, well-made, rawbon'd, lusty, strong, and nimble of Foot, long visaged, lank black Hair, look stern, hard favour'd, and of Copper-colour Complexion". They were extremely skilful in throwing a lance or harpoon and thwarting arrows shot at them. They had "extraordinary good Eyes, and discry a Sail at Sea farther, and see any Thing better than we". Among the privateers they learned to use firearms and proved "very good Marks-Men". They were "very bold in fight, and never seem to flinch or hang back; for they think that the white Men with whom they are know better than they do when it is best to fight, and let the disadvantage of their Party be never so great, they will never yield or give back any while any of their Party stand".

Such is Dampier's glowing tribute. If we turn back now once again to *Robinson Crusoe*, we cannot but be struck with the character of Friday. We have already seen that his eyesight was phenomenal. So also was his marksmanship. When savages appear off the island and Crusoe and Friday prepare to fight, Friday obeys to the letter Crusoe's orders, sends each bullet home, and declares, "Me die, when you bid die, master". He does die later, fighting bravely the savage enemies of his master, all as Dampier describes the valour and fidelity of Mosquito-men at such times:—

> I order'd all my men to keep close, lest they should shoot any more arrows, and made all our guns ready; but being so near as to be within hearing, I made *Friday* go out upon the deck, and call out loud to them in his language to know what they meant, which accordingly he did . . . but immediately *Friday* cry'd out they were going to shoot, and unhappily for him poor fellow; they let fly about 300 of their arrows, and, to my inexpressible grief kill'd poor *Friday*, no other man being in their sight . . . We buried him with all the decency and solemnity possible, by putting him into a coffin, and throwing him into the sea: and I caus'd 'em to fire eleven guns for him; and so ended the life of the most grateful, faithful, honest, and most affectionate servant that ever man had.

So, along with Alexander Selkirk we must place Robin and Will, the Mosquito Indians, who served also as models for Defoe. Dampier, whom Defoe sought as friend and guide, brought them all together. Dampier rescued both Selkirk and Will, and Dampier's *New Voyage* made Will so famous a solitary that a later account of Selkirk significantly reminded its readers that Dampier's Mosquito Indian was marooned on the self-same island, too. As Robinson Crusoe had his Alexander Selkirk, so Man Friday had his Will and Robin.

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THE LITERARY COAST OF FRANCE

by Allan Ross Macdougall

FROM TOULON to Nice, in the South of France, there stretches about a hundred miles of shore line that is known to all tourists as the *Côte d'Azur*—the Azure Coast. To those interested in letters, however, it should be known as "The Literary Coast of France". For in that small area there live more internationally famous authors than can ever be met outside of a PEN Club gathering. Some of these writers merely live part of the year in rented villas; others, like H. G. Wells and Edith Wharton, own magnificent *domaines*.

I have said that the coast starts at Toulon, but in reality it starts a few miles to the west of the naval port, at Cassis. In that little fishing village celebrated by the great Mistral in his *Calendau* lives Yves Mirande the playwright, whose light comedies have already found their way to the American stage and screen. At Cassis also lived Edna St. Vincent Millay for a spell, some years ago. A memory of it in her volume *The Buck in the Snow* ends with the following verse:

> Do you recall the sweet-alyssum over the ledges
> Crawling and the tall heather and the mushrooms under the pines,
> And the deep white dust of the broad road leading outward
> To a world forgotten, between the dusty almonds and the dusty vines?

On towards Toulon is another little fishing village, Bandol. It has come up in style since the sad days during the War when Katherine Mansfield lived at the Villa Pauline and wrote, among other things, the first version of *Prelude*. In her *Journal*, 1915-16, she says:

> Nothing could be nicer than this spot, and it's so quiet and so high, like sitting up in a tree. I feel I shall be able to write here, especially towards twilight.

Bandol is now very fashionable—an all-the-year-round resort with a casino—but the artists and writers have not deserted it. If you should happen to see a slim young Negro walking along the *quai* you will know that he is Eric Walrond, an English writer whose stories of Panama, published under the title of *Tropic Death*, placed him at once in the forefront of the growing group of American and English Negro writers. In Bandol he has just finished a fictionized history of Panama. A near neighbour to him in the same village last summer was the American journalist and writer, George Seldes. Looking out on Mussolini's *Mare Nostrum*, he wrote a biography of the Italian dictator which I believe has now gone to press with the title *Sawdust Caesar*.

Further along the coast, nearer Toulon, lies yet another fishing village, Sanary. Here it is that the English essayist and novelist, Aldous Huxley, has elected to live. He has lately bought a house and will have as his neighbours the painter Kisling and the eternal *ingénue* of the Comédie Française, Cécile Sorel, who are also property owners there. And standing out from a group of

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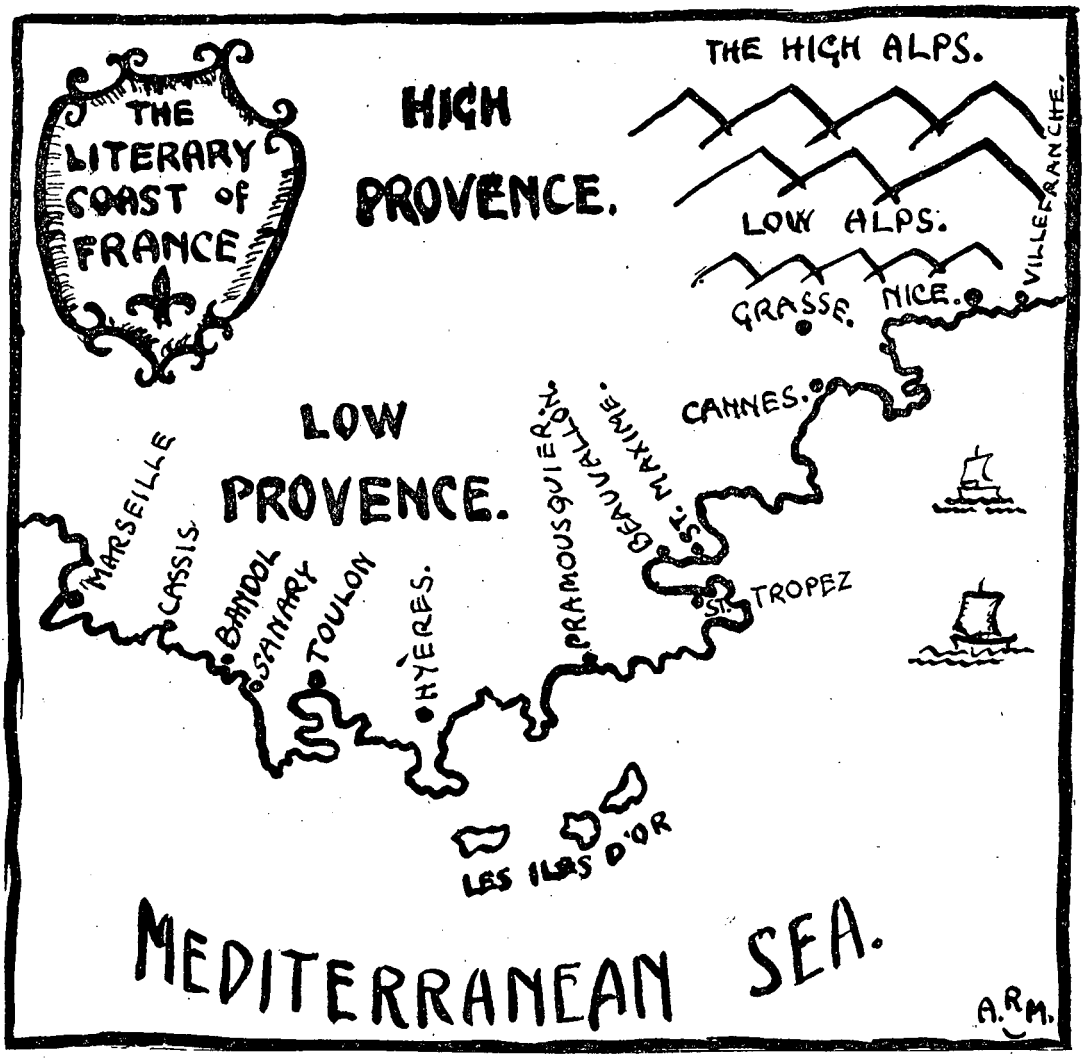

lesser French literary lights who summer at Sanary is André Salmon, poet, novelist, art-critic, and biographer of Picasso.

As you enter Toulon by the *Route Nationale* from Marseilles—the same road that Napoleon marched along to the siege of Toulon and to glory—you will see high up in the Gorges d'Ollioules, a ruined castle with a strange iron look-out tower. If you ask the natives they will tell you that it is the castle of Evenos, the property of Count So-and-So, long since deceased. But I know better. It is now the property of William B. Seabrook, the American travel writer. Motoring to Toulon one day, he looked up in the Gorges d'Ollioules and saw the eyrie-like ruin on its towering bluff, and in less time than it takes to tell he had found the widowed countess and bought an option on the place from her. As yet he does not live there for it will take some years and many dollars of royalties to renovate, reconstruct, and generally make the place habitable. In the meantime, having found the south to his

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liking, Seabrook makes his home in a vast log-beamed studio that looks over the old port of Toulon. There he wrote his African travel-book *Jungle Ways* and doubtless it will be there that he will sort out his material and write the life of Père Yakouba of Timbuctoo, having in the meantime flown from France to Africa to confer with the fascinating old ex-priest.

Toulon, with its wide port whose waters lap the stones of the Quai Cronstadt, is a favourite haunt of writers and artists. At a given moment during the sun-baked summer months you may see André Maurois, André Gide, Ford Madox Ford, Jean Cocteau, George Davis—the young American novelist whose first work *The Opening of a Door* was one of the revelations of the last publishing season—Jean Desbordes, Edouard Bourdet, Virginia Hersch, Léon Verane, Marjorie Worthington, and so on. Of the writers named—and there are others, many others whose names would mean something only to a French reading public—Ford Madox Ford, Marjorie Worthington, Edouard Bourdet, all have permanent residences in or near Toulon. The house of Bourdet, whose play *La Prisonnière* has circled the globe, stands near the house owned by the late Ralph Barton at Tamaris, and looks down on that inhabited by George Sand after her return from Majorca.

A few miles away, a little inward from the sea and well sheltered from the *mistral*, stands Hyères. Since its discovery by the English in the nineteenth century it has almost become British territory. There, two distinguished novelists have elected to live. Both Edith Wharton and Paul Bourget chose this ideal spot, this garden of the Hesperides, many years ago, and continue to pass the greater part of each year on their respective properties. Both live secluded lives —it is said that no interview-seeking journalist has ever succeeded in forcing the Wharton fastnesses.

Eastward along the coast, under the shadow of the Chaîne des Maures, there is a hamlet with about half a dozen houses and a long, firm, sandy beach; it is called Pramousquier. It is worth noting for two literary reasons. In the tiny hotel a few years ago Jean Cocteau and his ill-starred friend Raymond Radiguet lived and worked. There Radiguet wrote *Le Diable au Corps*, which has lately been given to English and American readers in an admirable translation by Kay Boyle. In the same house, then his private residence, Laurence Vail, the husband of Kay Boyle, wrote his fantastic murder-mystery story *Murder, Murder!,* which was a most successful book last season.

Passing Le Canadel, where Richard Aldington is sometimes to be seen, we come a few miles further eastwards, to St. Tropez mirrored in its blue bay. It is probably the most painted place in all France and Navarre; but it has attracted others besides artists. For many years now Madame Colette has made her summer home in a charming house on the hill, and several of her later books have been written there. Will she desert it now that she has opened a beauty parlour in Paris and is trying to wrest the laurels and the golden tribute from the Rubensteins and the Ardens?

One of Colette's books, *La Naissance du Jour,* has the village of St. Tropez for its setting and many of the well-known artists and writers who summer there figure in its pages. There is Villeboeuf the artist-author, Francis Carco the novelist, Régis Gignoux the playwright, and Segonzac, Dignimont, Luc Albert Moreau, and Daranges, famous modern artists. The poet and playwright Charles Vildrac, although he does not figure

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in Colette's pages, has made his home in St. Tropez for many years. And among the writers known to the American public may be cited Walter Duranty, who always spends his vacations out of Soviet Russia there, and Emma Goldman, who wrote her recently published *Living My Life* in a charming and not too anarchistic cottage which she owns by the Tropezian bay.

Across this bay lies St. Maxime, a very fashionable summer resort. There stands the house of Victor Margueritte, the unforgotten and unforgiven author of *La Garçonne*. At Beauvallon also on the bay lives Natalie Clifford Barney, known in French literary history as the "Amazone" of Remy de Gourmont. His fine *Lettres à l'Amazone* have lately been translated by Richard Aldington.

From Beauvallon to the outskirts of the fashionable Cannes there are no writers worthy of note. In and about Cannes may be found during the summer Lloyd Morris, Rebecca West, Philip Barry, John V. A. Weaver. And then to the north of that city, at Grasse, lives a writer who is worthy of a paragraph to himself.

It is quite a number of years since H. G. Wells fled the fogs of his native land to install his Lares and Penates in this sunny place. That he is happily installed no one can doubt after reading his praises of the countryside in *The World of William Clissold*.

> My window looks almost due South . . . and my view is wide and gently various upon hills and crests and further hills, a remote ridge from the Esterel and a sharp-edged inlet, and a dagger-blade of water. Beyond the last reluctant distances of the land appears the sea gravely blue and the horizon like the top edge of a blue silk barrier. . . . The whole of this land is a pleasant and prosperous region very indulgent to mankind. . . . Almost always the sky above this land is a pure clear blue or delicately streaked with filmy cloud, and the sunlight is a benediction. Sundown brings a glow of warm contentment.

Not so far away from Wells—as the bluebird flies—there lives another literary giant, Maurice Maeterlinck. Since the War he has lived in a house situated in the hills near Nice. Very rarely does he come out into the world, and he lives seemingly quite undisturbed by the literary fashions and quarrels of the day. Occasionally, at long intervals, the fruit of his philosophic meditations on insects is published for the further enchantment of his admirers.

And so on to Nice and the end of the line. Looking down on the white pleasure town from a little red house perched on the slope of Mont Boron live Laurence Vail and his wife Kay Boyle, poets both, novelists, and expert translators. In this house Kay Boyle wrote her *Year Before Last*, which has received, and rightly so, such high critical commendation. The setting of the book is precisely the countryside of the Alpes Maritimes which Kay Boyle knows so well.

Below the Vails, in the village of Villefranche, are the houses of Paul Morand, the French globe-trotting story-teller, and of Glenway Wescott, the young American novelist. Across the wide bay of Villefranche, on the peninsula of St. Jean-Cap-Ferrat, Somerset Maugham, after a life of voyaging, has taken a house and now lives, works, and entertains. He finds, doubtless, as all the others have done before him, inspiration in the Hellenic beauty and fragrant peace of these southern shores that are washed by the eternally blue and classic tideless sea.

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CHRONICLE AND COMMENT

When Are Authors Insulted?

We have received the following letter, on the stationery of the National Committee for the Defence of Political Prisoners:

DEAR EDITOR:

In your capacity as literary critic you are seldom called upon to consider social and political questions. They lie beyond your province and you are content to leave them alone if they leave you alone in turn. But at crucial moments in a country's history, decisive incidents occur whose issues no critic can ignore unless he is willing to stand silently by while the powers that be treat his profession with contempt and some of its finest representatives with scorn.

Such an incident took place in Washington last Wednesday, August 10. A delegation of American writers, headed by Sherwood Anderson, and including Waldo Frank, James Rorty, William Jones and Elliot E. Cohen, called at the White House to protest to President Hoover against his use of Federal troops in evicting the Bonus Army. The President refused to see them with the excuse that he was too busy. Yet he had time that same day to receive politicians, Boy Scouts, and children bringing birthday greetings!

The President sent in his stead Theodore Joslin, his assistant secretary. Instead of allowing Sherwood Anderson to read his protest, Mr. Joslin proceeded to scold the writers and lecture them like schoolboys. "It is your duty," he said, "to spread the truth"—and then gave the writers "the truth"—a completely distorted account of what had happened during the evacuation of the Bonus Army.

The Writers' Committee was turned away without a chance to read their statement which was later given to the press. On the following morning an Associated Press dispatch appeared in the newpapers, stating that "city police, who kept an eye on the writers, later reported to the White House that the delegation, upon leaving there, went to a Communist headquarters."

This was a deliberate and wholesale fabrication. Mr. Anderson with Elliot E. Cohen and Waldo Frank, went to lunch at the Press Club, James Rorty went directly from the White House to the train, and William Jones left to keep an appointment with a friend. The Washington police and the White House officials had evidently not heard Mr. Joslin's advice that: "It is our duty to tell the truth."

We did however—and so we tell this story to you. As literary critic and editor, you must believe that our writers are the awakeners and creators of the conscience of the nation. You must believe in the dignity and high office of the writing profession.

We appeal to you as public defenders of that dignity in asking you the following questions:

1) Do you not think that President Hoover's refusal to see a delegation of American writers while he receives delegations of children is an insult to the authors of America?

2) Do you not think that the whole incident demonstrated the inferior position writers as a class hold in America today?

3) Do you not think that this is in large measure due to the indifference of authors and critics to the burning social questions of the day and their conviction that they, as writers, are not concerned with such problems?

4) Do you not think that these questions are worthy and important enough to the cause of American literature to merit discussion from you and your readers?

Sincerely,

SHERWOOD ANDERSON
WALDO FRANK
JAMES RORTY
WILLIAM JONES
ELLIOT E. COHEN

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We append our answers:

1. Certainly not. It is an insult to the authors of America for some of them to pose as representatives of their profession for the purpose of furthering a particular cause, in this case the cause of Communism.

2. As a class, no. But it did very nicely demonstrate just why a large number of writers hold, and deserve to hold, an inferior position in America today: namely, because they are so chuckle-headed they can see nothing to do with their righteous indignation at modern industrial society but to put it at the service of the sham cure of Communism; to engage in all the infantile tactics of Communist propaganda, such as pretending they are interested in the veterans getting their bonus, trying to conceal themselves in "innocent clubs" like the National Committee for the Defence of Political Prisoners, trying to see the President without an appointment to read him a "protest" consisting doubtless of misstatements, humanitarian balderdash, and a sprinkling of the horrendous Communist jargon; and then crying to heaven when their plans are balked, and acting as though it were a grave insult to Communists to be reported as going to a Communist headquarters, or to children to be treated like children.

3. The writers we speak of are not indifferent to burning social questions; they are merely stupid about them.

4. No more than the above; except to linger for a moment to remember sadly the contributions of Sherwood Anderson and Waldo Frank to American literature, and to wonder what James Rorty, William Jones, and Elliot E. Cohen may have done for the cause.

E. M. FORSTER

Will Rothenstein's portrait drawing of the subject of an article in this issue. Reproduced from the handsome volume of Rothenstein portraits published by the Viking Press.

Tempest in a Bookshop

No literary anecdote which has recently come to our attention so neatly sums up the atmosphere of a period as the one with which our contributor Hugh Kingsmill opens his new biography of Frank Harris (*Farrar & Rinehart.* $2.50). The time is 1912. The scene is the inner room of Dan Rider's bookshop, off St. Martin's Lane in London. Middleton Murry, who was running a wildly enthusiastic article on Harris in the forthcoming number of *Rhythm*, had brought Katherine Mansfield along to meet his idol. These two, Kingsmill, and others were awaiting the Great Man's arrival.

Our talk, as we waited for Harris, was desultory, like the talk on the battlements of Elsinore before the arrival of Hamlet's full-throated fa-

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Vaughan and Freeman

PHYLLIS BOTTOME

the English novelist, who writes an article on her craft for this issue of "The Bookman". Her latest novel is "Devil's Due".

ther. A stir in the outer room of the shop, a movement of the air such as precedes an avalanche, and Frank Harris was with us. In his hand he brandished the June number of *Rhythm*. "Good God, Murry!" he roared. "What have you done here?"

"What is it, Frank? What have I . . .?" Murry rose to his feet, very pale.

"Listen to this!" Harris laid the paper on the table and turned the leaves over with rapid, scornful jerks. "Listen, all of you! 'James Stephens is the greatest poet of our day. With this book he has stepped at once into the company of those whom we consider the greatest poets the world has ever known. Henceforward,'—listen to this, the lot of you!—'henceforward James Stephens stands with Sappho, Catullus, Shakespeare . . .' Pah!"

"But, Frankie. . . ."

"You wrote this, eh?"

"Yes . . . but. . . ."

Harris placed his finger on a passage, quoted by Murry as better than Milton, in which God tells how he—

"threw down the sky
And stamped upon it, buffeted a star
With my great fist, and flung the sun afar."

"God's great fist!" Harris roared. "And you call this better than Milton! You, Murry, put this drivel above *Paradise Lost*!"

Most of those present knew that the next number of *Rhythm* contained Murry's comparison of Harris and Shakespeare. His terrible situation moved our pity, we were conscious of Katherine Mansfield's sharp brown eyes staring at Harris, but none of us ventured to intervene except Kenneth Hare, who could be heard through the thunder of Harris's scorn supporting Murry's faltering plea for this and that quotation.

On the table lay the contents bill of the July number of *Rhythm*, headed by the article on Harris: "Who is the Man?" Harris picked it up and read out the first three items:

"Who is the Man?"
"Drawing."
"The Shirt."

"The Shirt!" he repeated, and threw the bill down with a laugh. "Drawing of a man in a shirt, eh? By God, Murry, this paper of yours is going to make a stir," and he was beginning to improvise in Rabelaisian vein on the man in the shirt when Murry burst into tears and ran out of the shop.

"Good God!" Harris stared round in amazement.

"Oh, he'll kill himself!" Katherine Mansfield cried, and rushed after Murry. .

"What the . . .?" Harris gasped.

"That's Katherine Mansfield," I said.

"Katherine Mansfield!" He struck his brow with his hand. "Katherine Mansfield!" He turned to Harold Weston: "I thought she was a girl of yours."

Weston shook his head modestly.

"Why didn't any of you tell me?"

There was a long silence, and my next memory is of Harris and myself outside the shop.

"Go and bring them back, Kingsmill," he was saying. "Tell them I am infinitely sorry. I would not have had this happen for

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worlds." His hand went to his waistcoat pocket. "Take a taxi both ways." He pressed two coins into my hand—pennies, but the moment was too tense for trivial adjustments. "Both ways, Kingsmill," he repeated, and went back into Dan's.

Katherine Mansfield and Murry were sitting opposite one another on either side of the fireplace in their Gray's Inn Road flat. They had been crying, but were now composed.

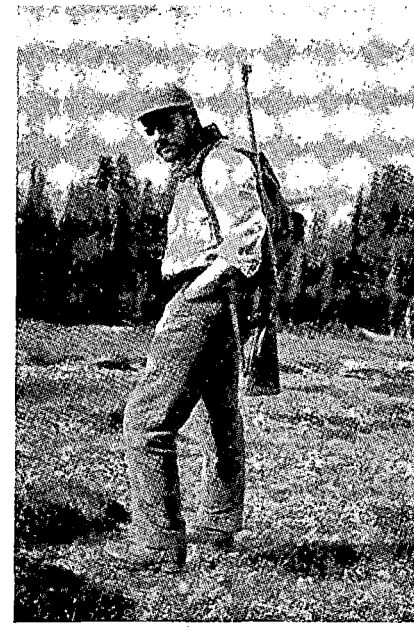
"Harris is awfully sorry," I said. "It was just his . . . you know. He wants you to come back. He sent me in a taxi."

They shook their heads. "He's wonderful, wonderful!" Murry sighed. "But . . . No, not just yet. Not to-day."

"Not to-day," Katherine Mansfield echoed.

"He'll be awfully worried if you don't. He was frightfully upset. It was just his . . . he didn't mean it. You know how carried away he gets. I've never seen him so upset. . . ."

Finally they were persuaded to return, and the evening ended quietly. In the next issue of *Rhythm* Murry duly published his article on Harris, but added at the end that Harris was "a man whose word of praise can change the whole of life for me for months, and a word of condemnation make me cry till I think my heart would break. Even if *Rhythm* achieves nothing else that is ultimately permanent, it shall be rescued from oblivion by this alone, that it told the truth about Frank Harris".



ERNEST HEMINGWAY

in hunting costume. His book on bull-fighting, "Death in the Afternoon", is reviewed in this issue. Below, a caricature of Hemingway as a bull-fighter by the Spanish painter, Luis Quintanilla.

The Appleton Biographies

THE new series of Appleton Biographies is a daring venture in publishing. It is based on three perfectly ridiculous assumptions: that people really want to read good writing; that the great men of the past are still great; that to view any human life steadily and as a whole is desirable or even possible. The courage of the Appleton editors has produced a shelf of—so far—eight urbanely written volumes, of less than two hundred pages each, and there will be more in the spring. The authors are men of well-matured interest in the fields in which their subjects move. They have not crammed for the occasion like Strassburg geese, nor on the other hand have they buried their heads like the ostrich in the archaeology of one human being.

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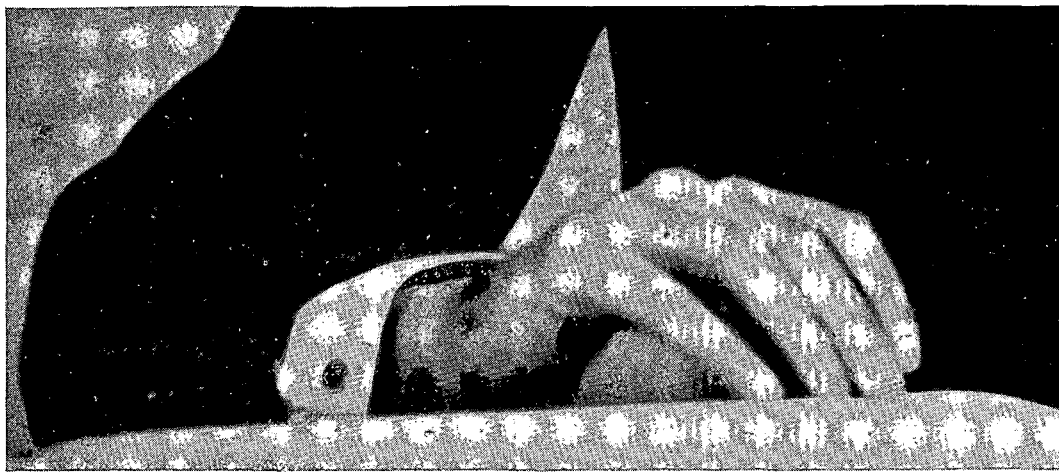

LITERARY HANDS: A CONTRAST

Above: The lean, aristocratic writing hand of T. S. Eliot. Below: The febrile fingers of Jean Cocteau assume a characteristic pose. Opposite: The sturdy hands of Jakob Wassermann, belying the luxuriant fancy of his work.

The *Voltaire* of André Maurois was reviewed in the September BOOKMAN, and in this issue are reviews of Sacheverell Sitwell's *Mozart*, John Buchan's *Julius Caesar*, and Clifford Bax's *Leonardo*. Lenin is treated by James Maxton, the Socialist Member of Parliament from Glasgow, and that other great Oriental, Akbar, by Sir Laurence Binyon. Sir John Fortescue, the military historian, writes on Marlborough, and the Reverend Wilfred Knox, the Anglo-Catholic, on St. Paul.

The last of these is disappointing. One would almost gather that it is impossible to make St. Paul attractive, especially when the writer's main effort is directed toward making him plausible. The other biographers are less guarded in their enthusiasm, and therefore more at ease; yet they have avoided hagiography as well as argument. They make no pretence of having settled all the problems or of having arrived at absolute truth. In each case a list of authorities is indicated, conveniently at the end of the book, so that the interested reader may pursue the subject and test the ideas at his leisure. It is likely that many will be tempted to do so.

Perhaps the most engaging feature of the biographies is the skilful way in which the

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subject is framed in the ideas of his time. Other figures are necessarily kept in the shadows of the background; there is not space for much description of material circumstances. Nevertheless one is immediately made to feel at home there, and brought almost without realizing it into communication with the presented character.

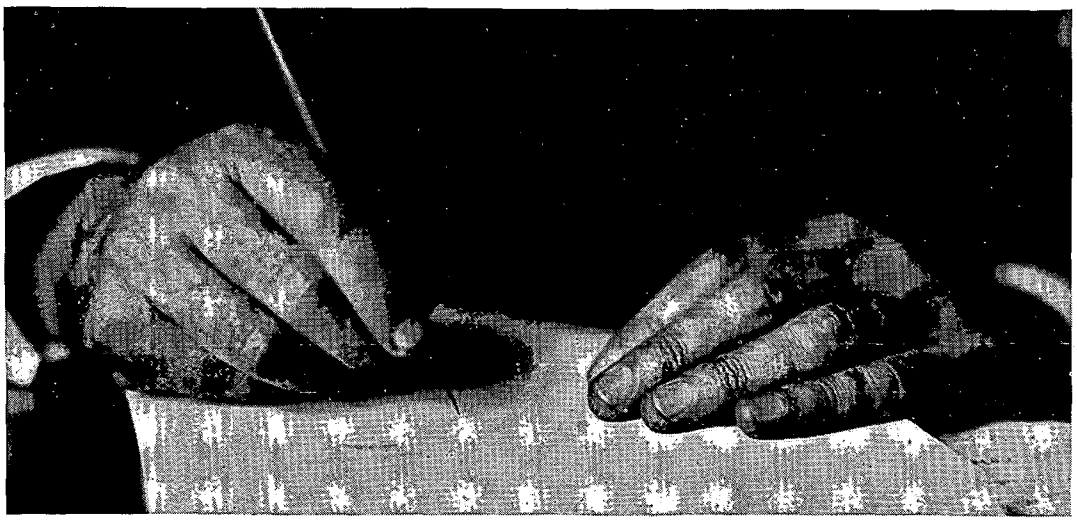
Of the new volumes to which we may look forward, the publishers have told us only four: *William the Conqueror,* by Hilaire Belloc, *Prince Charlie,* by Compton Mackenzie, *Mark Twain,* by Stephen Leacock, and *St. Augustine,* by Rebecca West. Five people are already quarrelling violently over the privilege of reviewing one of them.

Proust

THE publication by Messrs. Boni a few weeks ago of *The Past Recaptured* at last completes the American edition of Marcel Proust's much praised and little read seven-volume life work. It is safe to say that no other contemporary writer has been at once so abundantly discussed and so scantily consulted in this country as the author of *A la Recherche du temps perdu.* Most of those who pretend to any opinions on contemporary literature have at least sampled those endless, poised, exquisite sentences that are so defenceless against parody. Many more have read about them in the thousand-and-one commentaries that the Frenchman's work has called forth. And nearly everyone pretending to cultivation has at one time or another pronounced his name with a knowing air (much, indeed, as Mr. Parkhurst describes the use of Pushkin's in his delightful *The Cult of Culture* in this issue). But upon the library shelves of our cosmopolites stand hundreds of dusty sets of the complete French edition with their pages uncut and unprofaned by human eye (unless perchance the first forty pages of *Du Côté de chez Swann* were cut during a long ocean voyage); and Messrs. Boni regretfully stated last month that with the exception of *Swann's Way* and *Within a Budding Grove,* which have sold 40,000 and 17,000 copies respectively, the average sale per volume of the American edition has been less than 6,000 copies.

* * *

The explanation, of course, is that Proust, like the Joyce of *Ulysses* and *Work in Prog-*



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ress, is for most people a catchword and a curious character, rather than an author whose work one reads with pleasure, profit, or avidity—with these differences, that whereas Joyce's theories have given stimulus to a large number of popular imitators, no one has yet had the temerity, talent, or time to essay an imitation of Proust; and that while Joyce is a retiring original who emerges only occasionally from behind mysterious smoked glasses, Proust was a charming, pathetic, inimitable figure whose contemporaries have preserved his personality in anecdotes that are an endless fascination.

A few months ago (in the May number of *Harper's Magazine*) Proust-mentioners were given perhaps the most delightful single picture yet drawn of this "gently urgent ghost", in an unassuming article by his cousin, Valentine Thomson. She tells of him, "a tall, frail, eager, intense, and forlorn figure", as she knew him in her childhood, and gives us a delicious anecdote concerning the wedding of Robert Proust, on which occasion she and Marcel were to march down the aisle side by side to make the traditional collection for the poor.

When Marcel came to offer me his arm I discovered that he was bundled up like an explorer in the Arctic. He had not seen the light of day for months; he feared the cold as much as he did the daylight, which he could no longer stand at all. He had pulled three overcoats over his evening clothes, and his shirt-front bulged over I don't know how many thicknesses of wool. His neck was swathed in woolen scarves.

As for me, I was at the age when one attaches the greatest importance to appearances. The very thought of the grotesque picture we made terrified me. But when the moment came to pass between the pews to receive the offerings of the guests, the situation became tragic. Marcel could barely move, buried as he was beneath so many garments. As for slipping between two pews, it was definitely impossible. I had to make an instant and, to so young a girl as I was, a humiliating decision:

"Wait in the aisle," I whispered desperately. "I'll go in alone."

While the organ played I did the "questing" by myself. Behind me, at each row, stood Marcel, an unbelievable figure, his Lazarus-like face with its melancholy moustache rising like a surprise out of his woolly black cerements. He felt he had to explain himself, and to each row in turn he announced in a loud voice that he was not able to dress otherwise, that he had been ill for months, that he would be more ill that evening, that it was not his fault.

* * *

More recently Jean Cocteau, in his curious book *Opium*, published last month by Longmans, has given us, imbedded among dazed and fragmentary epigrams, a number

AN OPIUM DREAM

One of the series of fantastic pictures drawn by Jean Cocteau as he was entering or awakening from an opium dream, during his cure from opium addiction at St. Cloud. From his new book, "Opium: The Diary of an Addict".

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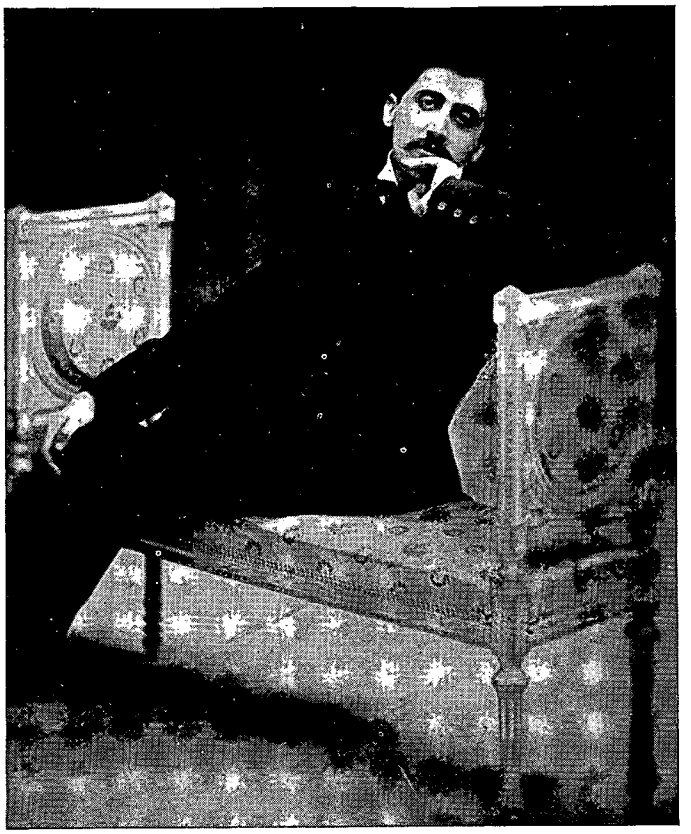

MARCEL PROUST

Whose monumental novel, "Remembrance of Things Past", has been completely rendered into English with the publication last month of the seventh and final volume "The Past Recaptured". The photograph shows the elegance and social charm that made him for years a popular —if temperamental—figure in the aristocratic circles upon which he drew for his elaborate and subtle psychological analyses.

of his Proust recollections that are as entertaining as any hitherto published. It was M. Cocteau, it will be remembered, who first published in his *Hommage à Marcel Proust* the famous incident of the tip to the doorman at the Ritz. ("Can you lend me fifty francs?" asked Marcel of that dignitary. . . . "Certainly, M. Proust!" . . . "You may keep them. They were intended for you." . . . followed the next day, needless to say, by a real tip of three times the sum.) Now M. Cocteau tries to begin at the beginning.

It is impossible for me to remember the first time I met Proust. Our crowd always regarded him as a celebrated man. I can see him, with a beard, on the red seats of Larue's (1912). I can see him, without a beard, at Madame Alphonse Daudet's, Jammes worrying him like a horsefly. I see him again, dead, with the same beard as in the beginning. I can see him, with and without a beard, in that cork-lined room, full of dust and medicine bottles, sometimes lying in bed, sometimes with his gloves on, sometimes standing in a villainous looking dressing-room, buttoning a velvet waistcoat over his poor square torso, which seemed to hold his machinery, and eating noodles as he stood.

I can see him among the slipcovers. They were on the chandelier and the armchairs. The shadows sparkled with naphthaline. He leaned against the drawing-room mantelpiece of this *Nautilus*, like a character out of Jules Verne, or he would stand beside a picture frame, draped in crêpe, in full dinner clothes, like Carnot when he was dead.

* * *

A little further on Cocteau describes the ghostlike Marcel during a visit to the Louvre, looking like "a lighted lamp at midday, or the ring of a telephone in an empty

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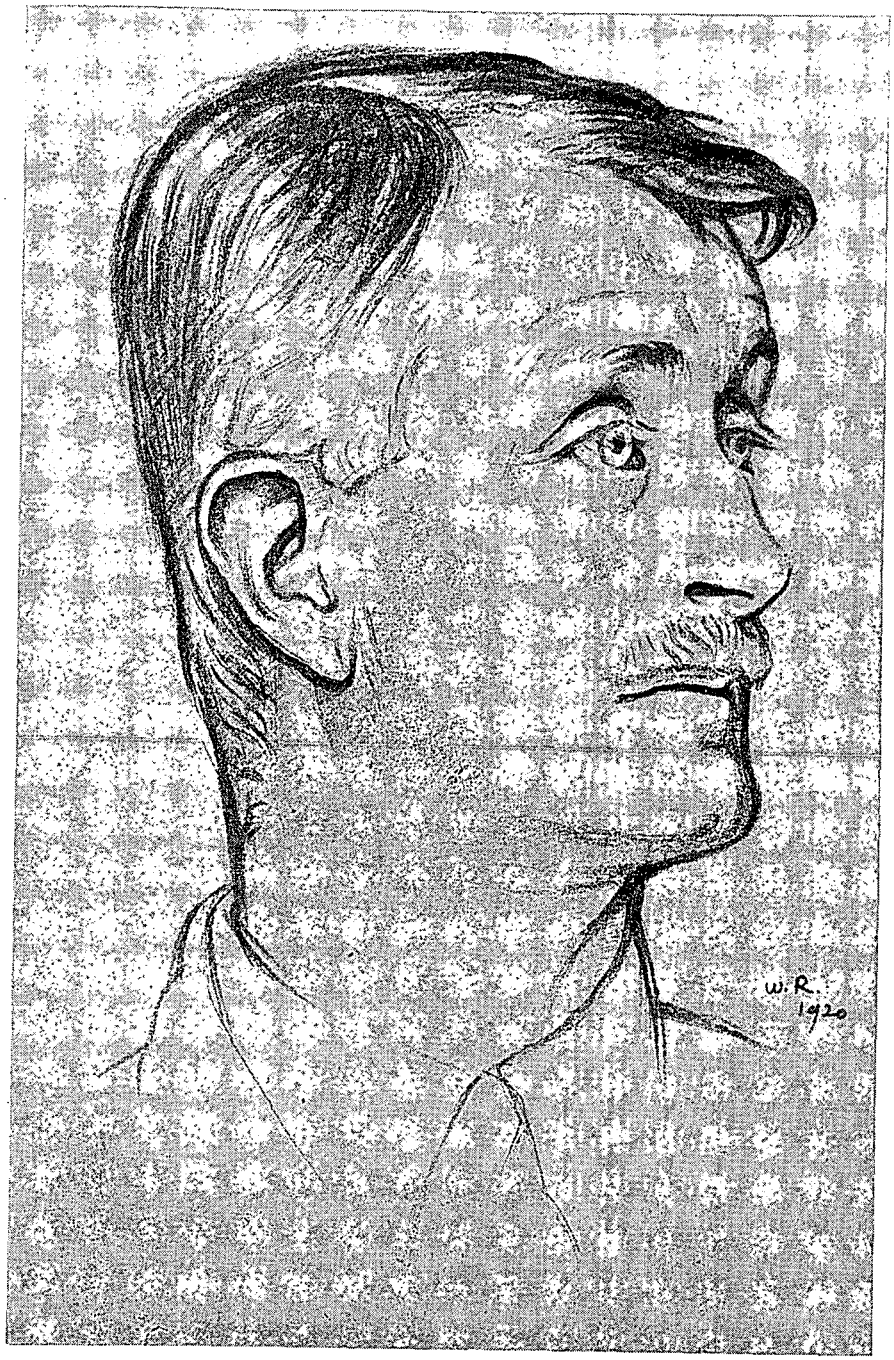

JOHN MASEFIELD

From "The Portrait Drawings of William Rothenstein", published by the Viking Press.

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house", and then tells the characteristic story of Proust's delightfully exaggerated delicacy one evening when he was to join Cocteau in the latter's rooms at eleven, and Cocteau, delayed, returned at midnight to find his strange friend sitting quietly outside the open apartment door in the dark.

"Marcel," I cried, "you might at least have waited for me in my apartment. You know that the door is always ajar." "Dear Jean," he replied, in that tone of voice, intercepted by his hand, which was a complaint, a laugh, "dear Jean, Napoleon had a man killed because he waited for him in his apartment. Of course, I would have only read Larousse, but letters and other things might have been lying around. . . ."

* * *

One other characteristic bit from the Cocteau book deserves quotation—Cocteau's description of the poetically addressed letters which he and Proust used to exchange. On the envelope of one of them were simply the words:

Facteur porte ces mots, te débarrassant d'eux
Au boulevard Haussmann chez Marcel Proust, 102.
102, Boulevard Haussmann, oust!
Courez facteur, chez Marcel Proust.

The strange thing was that these letters, thanks to a friendly and literary-minded postman such as only France could produce, actually used to be delivered.

Youth of a Poet Laureate

THE announcement by Messrs. Macmillan of a new volume of verse by England's Poet Laureate, to be published next month, offers occasion to recall a characteristic description of the poet when he first turned to literature which appeared last year in that most quotable of all recent literary and artistic memoirs, Will Rothenstein's *Men and Memories*. "On Sunday evenings", begins Mr. Rothenstein, whose drawing of his subject is reproduced in this department, "we often went to the Strangs at Hamilton Terrace. . . .

Laurence Binyon was a familiar there, and one evening he came, bringing a stranger, a quiet youth, with eyes that seemed surprised at the sight of the world, and hair that stood up behind like a cockatoo's feathers. As a youth he had run away to sea, Binyon whispered, and had had wondrous adventures; now he wanted to write; but he was very poor, and Binyon was helping him. After supper the stranger seated himself on the floor, and we sat round while he told us tales of adventure: how he and a few shipmates had fared in South America, where, being penniless, they nearly starved. Once, during a storm, they had fixed their jack-knives in their caps, hoping the lightning might strike them and put an end to their misery, so wretched they were. Masefield—this was the young man's name—spoke in a deep and solemn voice; a serious and romantic youth, I thought; and I got to like him. Indeed, everyone liked him, and wished to be helpful; but to help is not always an easy matter. Hearing that Lawrence Hodson was planning an exhibition at Wolverhampton to show the important work being done outside the Royal Academy, Masefield successfully offered himself as a secretary. And an admirable secretary and organizer he proved. He wrote, too, an introduction for the catalogue, one of his earliest pieces of prose to be published. Both Binyon and Yeats encouraged Masefield's adventures in poetry; so, I think, did Cunninghame Graham. Masefield himself had a passionate admiration for Conrad. When later I got to know Conrad, I took him Masefield's *Salt Water Ballads*, and some of his stories; but Conrad had conceived one of his odd prejudices against Masefield, and indulged in a violent outburst against him. Whether his prejudice lasted I do not know."

Mr. Masefield's forthcoming work, to be entitled *A Tale of Troy*, is a collection of narrative poems describing successive episodes of the great Greek epic.

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The Indignant Dead

A PARODIST whose name is new to us—Mr. N. K. Coghill—publishes in the current number of *The London Mercury* an amusing poem in the Miltonic manner, describing an indignation meeting held in Elysium by the Immortals of English Literature to express "their resentment of certain methods of critical biography much in vogue in the present age". Milton presides, surrounded by Chaucer, Dryden, Pope, Wordsworth, Browning, Tennyson, Shakespeare, and the rest. He opens the meeting by describing the common danger:—

Know then our state assaulted by the tongues
Of Mortals impudent and curious
Critics, self-styl'd, malign Biographers,
Who us, secure in classic niche, disturb
With libelling hate, or worse, pretended love.
Nor only to the quibbling havoc done
By blind Emenders, niggling Artisans
Who live to dot the i conjectural,
Nor even to those quainter dolts, who lust
After our First Editions, valued for
Half-Titles—nay, half-trifles!—colophons
And like absurdities, do I refer.
Such wrongs and follies we are strong to bear.
But more momentously we are beset
By sly Inquisitors and Plausibles,
Psychologists and false Interpreters,
Blind Noses! Scenting complexes and crimes
Perversions, Inhibitions, Attitudes,
(Presumptuous Exegesis!), to construct
An Idiot Phantom for the Heavenly Muse.

Tennyson, "a bearded Lord, who, tolerant, cooed", pleads for patience, but Pope arises to demand redress. His first fling is interrupted by Blake, but then he resumes:—

Pope

Not undisturbed by consequent applause,
His notes consulted, and with rising voice
His peroration flung:
"But what if Negligible Nonsense mate
With Pseudo-Science to assault the Great?
When sham philosophizing is conjoin'd
With bogus analysings of the mind?
Lo! *Wordsworth* flames with sensual desire!
See *Shakespeare* mounted on a wheel of fire!
His heroes charged with complexes of brain
That only *Bedlam's* doctors can explain!
Milton a compromise of Pride and Lust!
Keats in a clinic for consumptives thrust!
If *this* be Criticism, call the hearse,
Bury Intelligence with ritual curse
Amid the general darkening of the Universe!"

Suddenly a messenger bursts into the meeting, shouting:—

"Immortals, fly! Elysium is invaded!
The Gates of Gold and Adamant are burst!
Armies of Press-Reporters are paraded,
Reviewers and Biographers accurst
Come in their legions, crowd upon our Borders
With the fell engines of their various orders,
Questionnaires, Film- and Gramophone-Recorders,
American experts in the Third Degree
Cunning Broadcasters of the *B.B.C.*,
Dons, Doctors, School-marms, Psychoanalysts
Mounted on foaming Theories! And their fists
Grasp myriad pens, each one a Poet's death!"

Finally the conference breaks up in disorder, when each critic snatches

His own peculiar Victim, each extorts
Confessions, autographs, and locks of hair
Drags forth his dreams, thrusts in Thermometer,
Tries for his knee-reaction, volleys words
Behaviouristic, lays him on the bed
Of Procrustean Theory, hacks or racks
Until the mutilated poet fits.
Some with the engines of detraction work,
Some from neat cylinders of gassy praise
Inflate: mud others fling, nor miss their mark.
If Flight be strong, then stronger is Pursuit;
The Poets flee and are discomfited
Who, as they flee, are psychoanalysed.

Apparently Mr. Squire is not only a brilliant parodist himself, but includes a gift for finding parodists among his numerous editorial accomplishments.

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ROSAMOND LEHMANN

whose new novel "Invitation to the Waltz", is reviewed in this issue and called by our reviewer the best work Miss Lehmann has yet done.

Irresponsible Pseudo-Science

Popularizers of science are divided into three categories: the useful, the futile, and the pernicious. It would take a good deal of space to deal justly with the last, but there has recently come to our attention one example of pernicious popularization which demands an editorial condemnation. It is a volume designed to explain dreams scientifically, and to assist the reader to interpret his own dreams.

It might first be stated that this book is presented anonymously, the work of "two collaborating authors, one a practising psychologist of wide experience and unquestioned reputation, the other a journalist, who is married to a psychologist and is thoroughly conversant with the subject". The publishers' explanation of the necessity for anonymity is, to say the least, peculiar. "Except in general principles," they write, "the modern study of dreams is still very controversial; so much so that no practising psychologist, however greatly he may wish to give the fruits of his experience to the general public, can put his name to anything but a very complex treatise and hope to preserve his professional standing among his colleagues." Then comes the anti-climax. Nevertheless, the publishers go on, "the authors believe that a book, setting forth simply and clearly the general principles involved in the interpretation of our dream life . . . is something which the general reader of today really needs. They have written it *without jeopardising their scientific conscience in the least degree*". (Italics ours.) What is

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this curious scientific conscience, which is evidently shared equally by a practising psychologist and a journalist, and perhaps even by the journalist's spouse? And above all, what is this unusual science, which can apparently have one standard for its practitioners and another for the gullible public?

Now we do not intend to quarrel here with the contention that the interpretation of dreams is a science, exact or otherwise, or to say more than we have about such lame excuses for anonymity. But we do believe that we are justified in holding that at present the primary appeal of a popular book on this subject is exactly the same as the appeal of palmistry, phrenology, numerology, astrology, and a dozen other recognized delusions now generally classified as pseudo-science—to say nothing of the added appeal of salaciousness which the dream-interpreter's emphasis on sex makes inevitable. That the publication of such a book should be justified as answering a demand for scientific knowledge is inexcusable.

To attempt to root out the great public interest in pseudo-science is a futile task, as any librarian in the "science" section of a large public reference library will assure you. But it would seem that in their own interest those who are concerned with the future of psychology as a true science should not permit the names of a number of outstanding figures in their field, including that of a former President of the American Psychological Association, to be made to appear as moral sponsors of a book whose appeal is wholly to the pseudo-scientific mind.

Buried Gold

It always gives us a wholly unjustifiable pleasure to come upon articles buried in old files of The Bookman which, if they were marketed by the same author today, would command a price almost astronomically beyond what any editor of a literary journal can now afford to pay. One such article which has recently attracted us is a piece on *Authors' Letter Boxes* by Edwin Lefèvre, who at the time he wrote it (September, 1905) had just published in book form his immensely popular *Wall Street Stories* and *The Golden Flood*.

"The first genuine letter from a stranger I ever received", he wrote, "was this, sent from a fashionable summer resort in Massachusetts."

> "Will you pardon an Englishwoman sojourning in your country, if she ventures to request your autograph? She has read your stories and has greatly enjoyed them."

She had a very pretty name [continues Mr. Lefèvre]. I wrote back that she doubtless had made a mistake, and could not have enjoyed *my* stories, because she was English and a woman. But that if she wished to do a good deed, would she let me name the heroine of my next novel after her? She replied at once:—

> "I have read your Wall Street stories, all of them, and I've enjoyed them all. A friend explained some of the points, but not many, notwithstanding my sex and nationality. As for using my name for your heroine, you are welcome to it. It will not be mine much longer. I'm to be married next week."

That man got a treasure.

Another amusing incident which Mr. Lefèvre reported concerns unsolicited suggestions of plots.

They come with pleasing frequency. Such people are real friends. They go out of their way to help you. Here is one, from Toledo, Ohio:—

> "I have read your Wall Street stories with much interest. Keep it up. There is one story you ought to write, about a man in this office that we call Willie the Puke. He is a stinker. He always brags when he wins,

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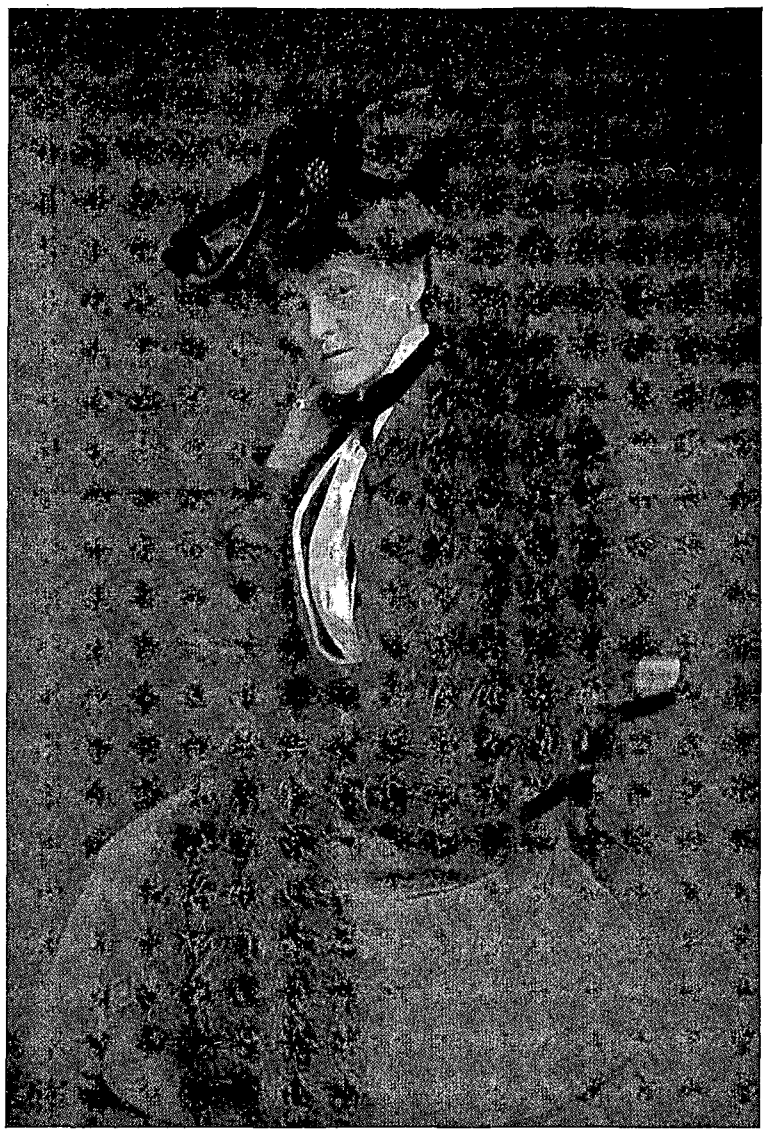

EDITH WHARTON IN 1905

The second of a series of pictures taken from old files of "The Bookman". This appeared in the issue for April 1905. In 1905 was published her second novel, "The House of Mirth", which immediately placed her in the forefront of American novelists and at the same time became a best-seller. In reviewing it for "The Bookman", Edward Everett Hale, Jr.—whose lamented death occurred the other day—called it "the most intense tragedy of recent years". It is interesting to note the concluding paragraph of the review: "And after that, what then? one may ask. Suppose you are voluptuously absorbed, that your mind sees stars, that you cannot sleep? Is that all one can say? Is there no moral teaching? No problem? No message? No criticism of life? There is not, very fortunately, any one of these things. There is nothing that needs to be discussed or talked about, or answered. There is simply the impression of poignant tragedy, the pity and awe with which one becomes silent". But reviewers of Mrs. Wharton's later novels, particularly the most recent, "The Gods Arrive", have felt that Mrs. Wharton's novels have, if anything, rather overemphasized messages, morals, and criticisms of life.

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WYNDHAM LEWIS

A self-portrait, which it may be interesting to compare with the photograph on the opposite page. This portrait was published in Lewis's occasional magazine, "The Enemy".

but when he loses it's always the broker's fault. He owes us some money, and we can't sue him because everything is in his wife's name. He is a lightweight, and he is full of hot air. He therefore weighs seventeen pounds less than a toothpick. You ought to write him up. Awaiting your reply, I remain,

Yours truly,

P.S. You can call him Willie the Puke. Everybody here would know who you mean. Let me know in what number it appears.

I made the mistake to thank the Toledo man, telling him I knew the type, and I tried to be funny, and suggested that the title of *Willie the Puke* would look bully in the *Century's* table of contents. He wrote back *McClure's* was the place for it—I suspect he was thinking of the *Century's* 35 cents per—and then began a one-sided correspondence that lasted a year. He evidently travelled for his firm, for I used to get letters on hotel stationery from various cities, all full of fresh and abominable details about *Willie the P.*, and asking when it was coming out.

We know Mr. Lefèvre will not be disturbed if we suggest that he could probably sell this article today for about twenty times what poor Harry Thurston Peck, who was editing THE BOOKMAN twenty-seven years ago, could possibly have paid him for it. In fact perhaps some day he will. If the idea attracts him, we cheerfully stand ready to supply him with a free copy of THE BOOKMAN in which his article originally appeared, and shall ask only one favour in return: that he persuade some publisher to bring out in book form, for the benefit of those who still enjoy a really absorbing human-interest adventure story without benefit of sociological implications, what we have always considered the best tale he ever wrote. It was called, as we remember it, *More Precious than Rubies,* and is buried somewhere in the files of *The Saturday Evening Post.*

Invective and Abuse

MR. WYNDHAM LEWIS—the angry one, as Miss Storm Jameson says, to distinguish him from his milder namesake—has been travelling in North Africa, and in the course of his wanderings was overtaken—at the Grand Hotel in Fez—by a French cinema company. His impression of the actors, as he reports it in his new book *Filibusters in Barbary* (McBride. $5.00), is for deadly humourlessness, for invective for its own sake, and for sheer enormity of abuse contrasted with insignificance of object, quite the most remarkable thing we have ever seen. We present a section of it, suitable for framing, to those who collect such things.

These fifty dumb characters in search of an author dumb enough to concoct a plot and text for them (accompanied by the sharp-shooters of the mechanical staff) swarmed forward, vociferous and replete with a strident reality that was

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so thin as to stamp them anywhere as screen folk—creatures that is of an art at one remove from the shadow picture. With all the prestige of this idiotic industry (as practised in our Western savagery) they gave the hotel staff something to live for, and a scene of great animation was the result. They swung (if of the Mix class)—danced, shuffled, dashed, sidled, stalked or tottered in, each according to his kind: noticeably *two-by-two* (as if picked out into sex-pairs by an official Cupid) like the animals entering the Ark—for of course each of these Stars, however impotent a one-candle-power washout (even according to Box-office canons) must, off the Screen, move in a triangle of bloodshot adultery—to satisfy the business-end of the racket—in order to suggest the bombardment of an anguished fan-mail (if to no one else, to their fellow actors). . . . This company had come to Fez to enact a rather elaborate arabesque of kiss-stuff, crime and contraband of arms, to be called "The Three Unlucky Travelers".

One could imagine them as a diminutive, pthisic, gutter-people, who had started in gutter-theatricals, prospered, spread over the world (as the ——— have done) caricaturing any eccentricity, or imitating any particularly brutal behaviour on the part of the full-grown, "normal", master-people by whom they were surrounded—falling in and out of love, to show that they were *real* and not just puppets, and even taking their desperate pretence of reality so far at times as to blow their papier-mâché brains out—a small vampire, or vampish, kohl-lidded, hetero-sexed clan, an important subdivision of the *Untermensch*, selecting for their imitations for preference [various manifestations of] Crime . . . *all* violent, *all* guaranteed to be intelligible to the least talented, to the most adenoid-stifled gutter-infant, or to the lowest average level of City-serfdom.

This type of writing, which is as humourless in its way as the type of motion picture which it attempts to describe, has its admirers; but it always strikes us as a little pathetic to see so much energy expended to so little purpose. For was anyone ever really convinced by invective or converted by abuse?

A recent photograph of Wyndham Lewis, whose massive novel, "The Apes of God", recently published, has excited wide interest. His latest book is "Filibusters in Barbary".

Here is the beginning of a pretty controversy, which we prefer to let others carry on. For our own part, we merely recommend those who wish to see how this sort of thing can be properly done to turn to that most neglected of French pamphleteers, Paul-Louis Courier, whose delightful *Pétition aux Deux Chambres* (1816)—

Je suis Tourangeau; j'habite Luynes, sur la rive droite de la Loire, lieu autrefois considérable, que la révocation de l'édit de Nantes a réduit à mille habitants, et que l'on va réduire à rien par de nouvelles persécutions, si votre prudence n'y met ordre. . . .

and whose uproarious *Lettre à M. le Général Mossel* (1806)—

J'ai reçu, mon général, la chemise dont vous me faites présent . . .

still stand as surprisingly modern models of humour and effectiveness after the passage of a hundred years.

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Translation

EVER since a well-known New York publisher came to a friend of ours for "editorial advice" as to whether or not he should undertake a translation of a certain French novel, and he discovered that the novel had been translated and published eight years previously by—no, not the same publisher, that would have been over-perfect—but by another New York publisher of equal reputation, we have been convinced that the handling of translations offers a wide-open field for the efficiency expert.

It is for this reason, probably, that we leaped with such anticipation upon a publication the first number of which has recently been sent from Paris to those in this country who follow the foreign press—a record of translations appearing in Germany, France, Spain, the United States, Great Britain, and Italy, published by the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation and entitled (in what was once the most international of all languages) *Index Translationum*.

Eagerly we skimmed through the opening pages, devoted to translations appearing in Germany during the first three months of 1932—Blume, Carmichael, Gide, Gregor von Valencia, Agabekow, Viti de Marco, Hedin, Tschechow, Chwyljowyj, Aslagsson, Kobayashi—a pleasant pageant of international felicity, lion appearing beside lamb, Japanese beside Chinese, Turk meeting Greek. Fascinated, we fell upon such bits as "Wodehouse, Pelham Grenville, DIE FÜRSTIN VON BLANDINGS", being the German notion of P. G.'s *Summer Lightning*. And then we stopped. What, we thought, is the use of all this? Whom does it serve? And what information does it give that is not already available elsewhere to those who know where to look?

We are embarrassed to reply. With the best will in the world, we cannot see that these many-tongued gentlemen in Paris—the Committee of Experts includes a Frenchman, a Spaniard, an Italian, a Rumanian, a German, an Englishman, and a Pole—have done much more than create a generally pleasant impression that there are a lot of books translated into various languages these days, and that, now as always, the intelligent people of various countries have very little difficulty in getting along with each other. *Index Translationum* falls into three chief parts. The bulk of the publication consists of five lists, by countries, alphabetical by authors, of the books which have appeared in translation in those countries during the first three months of this year. But these lists are simply reprinted from the various national book-trade bibliographies (in Italy, the *Bollettino delle Publicazioni italiane*; in France, the *Bibliographie de la France*; in Great Britain, the *Publisher and Bookseller*; in America, *The Publishers' Weekly*) which make no pretense to the accuracy or completeness of, let us say, the Library of Congress or the Bibliothèque Nationale catalogues, and in any case are readily available to anyone in touch with a large city. A second part gives an alphabetical list of authors and translators—which, so far as the translators are concerned, is one way of giving honour where not much money is due, but otherwise seems of no great utility. The third part gives the names and addresses of the publishers of the volumes considered, which any book-importer would be more than pleased to supply.

* * * *

All this does not mean either that we bear any ill will toward the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation's generous effort (*Index Translationum*, published quarterly, costs the

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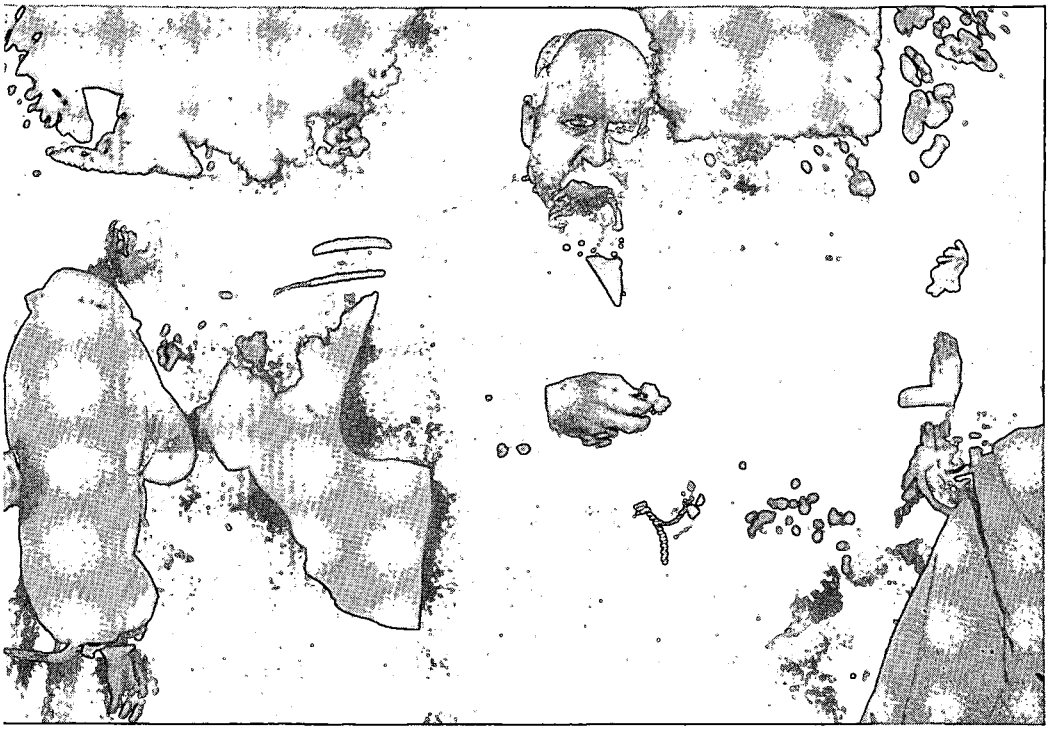

HENRY JAMES: TWO VIEWS

'he snap-shot above shows Henry James eating doughnut at a garden party given by Stephen 'rane at his English home, Brede Place, about 900. The other picture shows the more elegant imes of public association, exercising his aes-hetic sensibilities on a painting. The latter icture is reproduced from "Theatre and Friend-hip", by Elizabeth Robins (Putnam), contain-ıg a new series of unpublished letters. The let-'rs record Henry James's friendship with Miss 'obins, who was a young American actress pre-enting Ibsen to Londoners in the nineties, and 'lustrate his profound interest in all that con-cerns the theatre.

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subscriber only $1.00 a year and must cost the League of Nations a good deal more than this to produce), or that nothing can be done to improve the conditions under which translations are at present selected, made, published, and sold. Indeed, for some time we have been wondering whether American publishers could be persuaded to back a clearing-house of current information on the status of foreign books scheduled for publication in this country. Under such a system, each publisher would agree that once he had definitely contracted for the publication of a foreign book in this country, he would make an immediate announcement of the fact to the clearing-house. Any other publisher could then instantly learn whether or not the rights to a book which he was considering were available. This of course would do nothing to attack certain outstanding evils in the translation business, such as the existence of hordes of irresponsible amateur agent-translators, the low pay to translators, the poor quality of translations, and the exaggerated notions which some foreign publishers have developed concerning both the worldly wealth of American publishers and their complete lack of cultivation. But at least it would help to prevent the present welter, in which tardy cables flash back and forth—mostly forth—across the Atlantic, while American publishers gnash their teeth at foreign publishers and *vice versa*, and a good deal of time and money is spent by editors reading foreign publications which are already safely locked up in some other editor's safe.

* * *

One aspect of translations which the first number of *Index Translationum* makes clear, however, is that rarely does the corpus of current translations from a given language fairly represent the majority attitude or th best quality of the country of origin. We ex pect, of course, to find such novelists of pur entertainment as James Oliver Curwood an Zane Grey widely published abroad, and th *Index Translationum* confirms the expecta tion. But what about the "serious" novelists France is a good example. During Januar February, and March of this year, for on "conservative" novelist translated—Edit Wharton (*The Children*)—there appeare works from the pens of no less than te American experimentalists and "radicals' The list is impressive, and includes Ande son, Cabell, Dos Passos, Dreiser, Heming way, Sinclair Lewis, Upton Sinclair, an Gertrude Stein. Which is only one mor illustration of the fact that it is always th writers of the *avant-garde* who create th greatest interest abroad, and the *avant-gard* publishers in one country who show th greatest interest in the writers of another.

Dedications

Among French authors the practice of send ing large numbers of personally inscribe copies of their new books to literary critic and friends is long entrenched. Recently, how ever, the old habit of writing the inscriptio out in longhand to suit occasion and recipier has been yielding to a simpler method: tha of enclosing in presentation copies a visitin card bearing merely the printed inscriptio "From X . . . , who is absent from Paris." M Paul Morand usually improves upon th formula by substituting a grandiloquent "ab sent from *Europe*", but the most dramati substitution thus far is that which was re cently reported in the *Nouvelles Littéraires* a the time of the publication of Claude Fa rère's *L'Atlantique en rond*. M. Farrère use the phrase "From Claude Farrère, who is ur

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able to sign this book himself"—a statement which would have been ridiculous instead of dramatic, had every recipient not known that M. Farrère was still suffering from the bullet wound he received from Gorgulov's pistol when President Doumer was assassinated almost in his arms.

* * *

This reminds us of the ridiculous tale of a Boston author of over-generous instincts, which was reported to us some time ago and which we do not believe has yet appeared in print. This gentleman, unable to decide to which of five friends he wished to dedicate his book, hit upon the happy (and not wholly serious) experiment of having five separate dedication pages printed, each bearing a different name and each tipped into the copy intended for the friend whose name appeared upon it. The five favoured recipients were all delighted—until two of them got together and discovered what had happened. The copies distributed to the public, it should be added, carried no dedication at all.

In the Bookman Twenty-five Years Ago

[*October, 1907 Number*]

NEW BOOKS REVIEWED: *The Stooping Lady* by Maurice Hewlett . . . *The Temptation* by Richard Bagot . . . *The Younger Set* by Robert Chambers . . . *Empire Builders* by Francis Lynde . . . *To Him that Hath* by Leroy Scott . . . *Tinman* by Tom Gallon . . . *Barbary Sheep* by Robert Hichens . . . *The Weavers* by Sir Gilbert Parker . . . *Pragmatism* by William James.

AMONG THE ADVERTISEMENTS: New Books by James Whitcomb Riley—*Morning* and *The Raggedy Man* . . . In the manner of *Hearts and Masks*—*The Best Man,* by Harold MacGrath . . . Ready September 28th—*Camping and Tramping with President Roosevelt* by John Burroughs . . . *Little Journeys,* New Series, by Elbert Hubbard.

A caricature by Thomas Derrick in the London "Bookman": "The Waste Water.—Mr. T. S. Eliot amid the lamentations of the Thames Daughters, Leaves for America".

BEST BLURB: Critics in England are unanimous in declaring *The Car of Destiny* to be the best of all the Williamson romances. It is a most delightful and exciting dual love story, teeming with incidents encountered on an exhilarating motor chase across Spain. The scenes are contemporary with the recent Royal marriage, and King Alphonso is one of the characters. Young Lady Monica, in the Princess Ena's suite, a Spanish girl of rank, a Marquis and a young American are the chief actors. A magnificent description of the coronation bull-fight, with an unexpected and highly dramatic climax, fittingly culminates this sparkling story. Now ready. With several beautiful illustrations in colours. $1.50.

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THOSE NONSENSICAL VICTORIANS

PART TWO

by Frances Wentworth Knickerbocker

No one properly brought up in Victorian nonsense could skip *The Rose and the Ring*, which followed the first *Book of Nonsense* nine years later. To be sure, as the writer of the aforesaid dissertation will rise to remark, *The Rose and the Ring* like the *Bab Ballads*, is not pure nonsense. It is a mock-romantic, fairy-tale extravaganza—outrageous and delicious. Thackeray, already made famous by *The Book of Snobs* and *Vanity Fair*, could not resist allusions to the Order of the Pumpkin and the First Lord of the Toothpick, and sly digs at "the pen of Mr. G. P. R. James". King Valoroso must misquote Shakespeare and Prince Giglio deliver a speech in blank verse lasting three days and three nights. But our childish glee was all unaware of parody or allusion when, "His Majesty ground his teeth with rage, 'Hedzoff', he said, 'Hedzoff, good Hedzoff, seize upon the Prince. Thou'lt find him in his chamber two pair up. But now he dared with sacrilegious hand, to strike the sacred nightcap of a king—Hedzoff, and floor me with a warming-pan! Away, no more demur, the villain dies! See it be done, or else—h'm!—ha!—h'm! . . .'"

Of course it was for children that this *jeu d'esprit* was created. We should guess that, even if Thackeray had not told us how, one Christmas time in Rome, where no Twelfth Night characters could be had, he had drawn these characters and composed their history as a fireside pantomime for the amusement of his own little girls and a large family of little children in the same house. And if you have ever seen *The Rose and the Ring* performed by Tony Sarg's marvellous marionettes, you know something of the joy of the original child audience of 1853.

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Christmas-time for pantomimes, but for Wonderland

> A boat, beneath a sunny sky
> Lingering onward dreamily
>
> In an evening of July—
> Children three that nestle near
>
> Eager eye and willing ear
> Pleased a simple tale to hear—

So Lewis Carroll's reminiscent verses tell the story of that golden afternoon of July 4, 1862, on the drowsy Isis, when Alice Liddell and her two sisters first heard the tale of "Alice's Adventures Underground".

Never were time and place, teller and hearers, more fitly met than here for the creation of "the most original story in the world". Written out afterward for Alice herself, offered to the publishers at the persuasion of the writer George Macdonald, *Alice in Wonderland*, but slightly changed from the original version, dawned on a delighted world in 1865. We all know the story of the adventures, almost as strange as those of Alice herself, that have brought the famous manuscript to our own land.

THE COUNTESS GRUFFANUFF

As pictured by Thackeray for his humorous masterpiece, "The Rose and the Ring".

How he would have wondered at his fame—that shy little boy Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, born in an English rectory a hundred years ago! We catch a glimpse of his Lewis Carroll self in his nephew's *Life and Letters*, a gentle child playing curious games with pet snails in the rectory garden; and of the Charles Dodgson self, bringing a book of logarithms to his father and insisting, "Please explain". There followed a nursery magazine, *The Rectory Umbrella*, and, in due course, Christ Church College, Oxford, and a First Class in Mathematics. So, till the end of his days in 1898, the Reverend Charles Dodgson, Master, Tutor, Deacon, lived the still, secluded life of the college Don that he has made fun of in his *Phantasmagoria*. What rare eccentricities that life could breed Mr. E. F. Benson has recently reminded us in his *As We Were: a Victorian Peep-Show*. Who could create Wonderland, if not a serious Oxford Don whose closest friends were children? And where could Wonderland be found, if not in those green gardens, by that drowsy stream, where time almost seems to stand still on summer afternoons?

For of course it was Alice Liddell and her sisters, whose sweet grave faces still look from the photograph taken by their friend, who helped to make Wonderland. Their gay demands that "there will be nonsense in it", their cries when the weary teller begged to finish next time, "It *is* next time!" their in-

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Thackeray's Conception of the King in "The Rose and the Ring".

terruptions and exclamations, were interwoven with the tale. The very creatures with their endless arguments—the March Hare, the Mock Turtle, Tweedledee and Humpty Dumpty—are simply cantankerous children, pursuing utterly absurd premises to utterly logical conclusions.

"There's nothing like eating hay when you're faint," the King remarked to her, as he munched away.

"I should think throwing cold water over you would be better," Alice suggested: "—or some sal-volatile".

"I didn't say there was nothing better," the King replied, "I said there was nothing *like* it."

Their topsy-turvy logic is the inimitable co-creation of a logician and a child.

"You can draw water out of a water-well," said the Hatter: "so I should think you could draw treacle out of a treacle-well,—eh, stupid?"

"But they were *in* the well," Alice said to the Dormouse, not choosing to notice this last remark.

"Of course they were," said the Dormouse; "well in."

And Alice herself, that best-beloved of Victorian heroines, Alice with her unbobbed hair and her pinafore, her eager helpful hands and the "queer little toss of her head", she is the very Victorian child on whom we are told to look with pity. But who could pity Alice? And where is the modern child more courageous (even in tears), more self-possessed (even in the midst of being so many sizes a day), more friendly and courteous (even with the Duchess's chin on her shoulder or the White Knight falling off his horse at her feet)?

Now I am not claiming that only a child can read *Alice*. For it is true that the more you have experienced—imaginatively experienced—the more you will find in Wonderland and Looking-Glass Land. You must, for instance, have wrestled long years with language fully to appreciate Humpty Dumpty's way with words:

"When *I* use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less."

"The question is", said Alice, "whether you *can* make words mean so many different things."

"The question is", said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master—that's all."

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I only affirm that without a child's help Wonderland could not have been, and that without the childlike gift of "Let's-pretend", you shall in no wise enter into that kingdom.

For if you want to know what happens when an earnest Victorian tries to write nonsense without a child to help him, read, or try to read, Lewis Carroll's *Sylvie and Bruno*. In his preface to the first volume, he unconsciously revealed the secret of success and failure. In *Alice in Wonderland*, again in *Through the Looking Glass*, a third time in *The Hunting of the Snark*, he had, he well knew, captured originality: "By no voluntary effort can I accomplish it; I have to take it as it comes". But after Alice came her imitators: "something like a dozen storybooks have appeared on identically the same pattern". And so he was forced to strike out yet another new path. But *Sylvie and Bruno* did not "come" to him. From its nucleus, a fairy-tale written in 1867 for *Aunt Judy's Magazine*, to its second volume published in 1893, it had been pieced together like a patchwork quilt, all sorts of odd ideas jotted down for over twenty years and strung together on a thread, or rather two threads, of story. The result is, as he admitted, a mixture, "introducing along with what will, I hope, prove to be acceptable nonsense for children, some of the graver thoughts of human life". Earnestly he foretold that "to the utterly gay" such a mixture would seem "ill-judged and repulsive", but only by such graver thoughts could amusement minister to the growth of character.

Alas for nonsense! If only the Reverend Charles Dodgson had not got the better of Lewis Carroll! If only Alice Liddell had not grown up! If only *Sylvie and Bruno* could have been read aloud to her! I tried it, on a child who has re-read *Alice* every summer since he could read at all. To Ugg-Ugg and the Professor and the children he listened with delight. But when they inexplicably vanished and gave place to Arthur and Lady Muriel, he interrupted, "No, I don't want to hear that part! Why does it keep jumping to the other people?" Lives there a child, I wonder, who could read through this amazing mixture of nonsense and fairy-tale with sentiment, melodrama, and solemn argument —the humans in *Sylvie and Bruno* argue worse than the creatures in Wonderland— on Determinism, Darwinism, and every Victorian Ism! One look at the index, ranging from "Accelerated Velocity, causes of", to

The Queen in "The Rose and the Ring".

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Alice and the White Knight, as drawn by John Tenniel for "Through the Looking-Glass".

"Sabbath-keeping for children", would be enough.

It is not that Lewis Carroll had forgotten children. Indeed, in Bruno he had caught a real little boy and put him into a fairyland where he never seems to belong. Hear Sylvie trying to teach him his lessons—everyday lessons, not the Wonderland kind that "lessen".

Sylvie: "No, he hasn't a head for Arithmetic—"

Bruno: "Course I haven't! Mine head's for *hair*. I haven't got a lot of heads!"

Sylvie: "Now Bruno, what does that spell?"

Bruno looked at it in silence for a minute. "I know what it *doosn't* spell," he said at last.

Sylvie herself, unlike Alice, is too good to be true. In fact she isn't true; she is simply a symbol of the conquering power of love. No, the trouble with *Sylvie and Bruno* is that, as the Duchess put it, "Everything's got a moral". And morals are fatal to nonsense.

The pity of it is that, scattered among the "graver thoughts" are gems of purest nonsense. There is the Professor with his umbrella-topped boots. "In ordinary rain", he admitted, "they would not be of much use, but if it ever rained *horizontally*, you know, they would be invaluable—simply invaluable." That is essence of nonsense: logic standing on its head. And there are the immortal "He-thought-he-saw" lyrics:

> He thought he saw a Banker's Clerk
> Descending from a bus:
> He looked again, and found it was
> A Hippopotamus:
> "If this should stay to dine", he said,
> "There won't be much for us!"

Here too is essential nonsense; the impossible happening naturally.

Of course, I am not trying to *define* non-

One of Henry Holiday's drawings to illustrate "The Hunting of the Snark".

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A drawing by Lewis Carroll—not by Rembrandt!—decorating a letter to one of his sisters. From S. D. Collingwood's "Life and Letters of Lewis Carroll".

sense. I know that you might as well try to catch a leprechaun. But I like to imagine it as the reverse of some lovely fabric, with a pattern all its own. For nonsense is the other side of sense, just as Looking-Glass House is only the other side of Alice's own drawing-room.

And we come very near to the hiding-place of nonsense when we follow the trail of the Snark into the subconscious mind of Lewis Carroll. It was the famous last line, "For the Snark was a Boojum, you see", from which the whole poem grew, and it occurred to him, "apropos of nothing, quite suddenly, during a solitary walk". Other bits of his nonsense came to him in dreams, "which I cannot trace to any antecedent cause whatever".

There it is. The quality of nonsense is a dream quality that comes of itself. And even though some nonsense-lover should trace the Snark or the Jabberwock to their hidden lairs as lovingly as Professor Lowes has followed the clues to *The Ancient Mariner* and *Kubla Khan*, yet will not their magic be explained away. For the world of Wonderland is the world of our dreams—a world in which the logical flows from the illogical. And so it is no accident nor literary device that Alice should awaken from Wonderland and run off, "thinking while she ran what a wonderful dream it had been", and from Looking-Glass Land, asking herself as she rubbed her eyes, "Which dreamed it?" For in these lands our fancies are set free, as are our minds in dreams—free to wander, and awakening, to see the everyday with clearer colours. So this wonder-world of Lewis Carroll's serious, seeking spirit re-echoes with the question of a greater poet, "Is life itself a dream, I wonder?" So he has left to all childlike spirits his land of nonsense.

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BOURNE INTO MYTH

by Dorothy Teall

WHAT happens to any personality that is in the public eye is well indicated by the title of Lloyd Lewis's book, *Myths After Lincoln*. The masses of the people who made a hero of the Civil War president recalled him with a devotion and a credulity that saw him all but walking on the water. Booth, the Judas in that case, was just as fabulously heaped with vileness. Both the evil and the good that men do is the merest mustard-seed to what comes to be connected with their names as time passes. Even in life we exist chiefly in other people's thoughts about us; yet while we occupy our fleshly envelopes we have some freedom to challenge our friends' and our enemies' neat ticketings of us. After death we are passive victims of the process that gives us more and more of what we already had and shears away in increasing measure whatever we had not. This mythologizing becomes so widely diffused after death that to control or direct it then is even more problematic than during the subject's life.

The sea-change wrought in a reputation by submersion in such a bath of myth may be traced with rare distinctiveness in the case of Randolph Bourne. As a literary critic whose small public was composed of self-styled intellectuals, Bourne might have been expected to be more accurately recollected and more aptly appreciated than most. But let us see.

December 22, 1931, marked the close of the thirteenth year since his death, which occurred in New York. He had been born thirty-two years earlier in Bloomfield, New Jersey, a suburb of the great city but also, during his childhood and youth at least, a fairly self-contained community. He came of a family of some substance in the town's life, but he did not belong to a prosperous branch of it. His relation to the society into which he was deposited was complicated by his deformity. He discusses this frankly enough in his essay, "A Philosophy of Handicap", in his first book, *Youth and Life*. Much of his writing, particularly in the *Atlantic Monthly* essays from which that first book was assembled, bears hidden testimony to the friendships of the Bloomfield days. It is not surprising that he should have felt restless and frustrated at the efforts to establish himself which followed his high-school years and that he should have had to wait, for a first taste of release, till he entered Columbia on scholarship and with advanced standing in 1909, when he was twenty-three.

Among the experiences that college brought him was a course under Dean Woodbridge of the Philosophy faculty. One day the Dean said to him, "Read the article in the *Atlantic* this month denouncing the younger generation. I wish you'd write a reply to it". Bourne did so, and the magazine shelved an answer already accepted in order to make room for his. He was, of course, elated; here was a major portal swinging open to him, and the future beyond it offered rosy vistas. Soon he was a fairly regular contributor, and Bloomfield was reading him—some of Bloomfield

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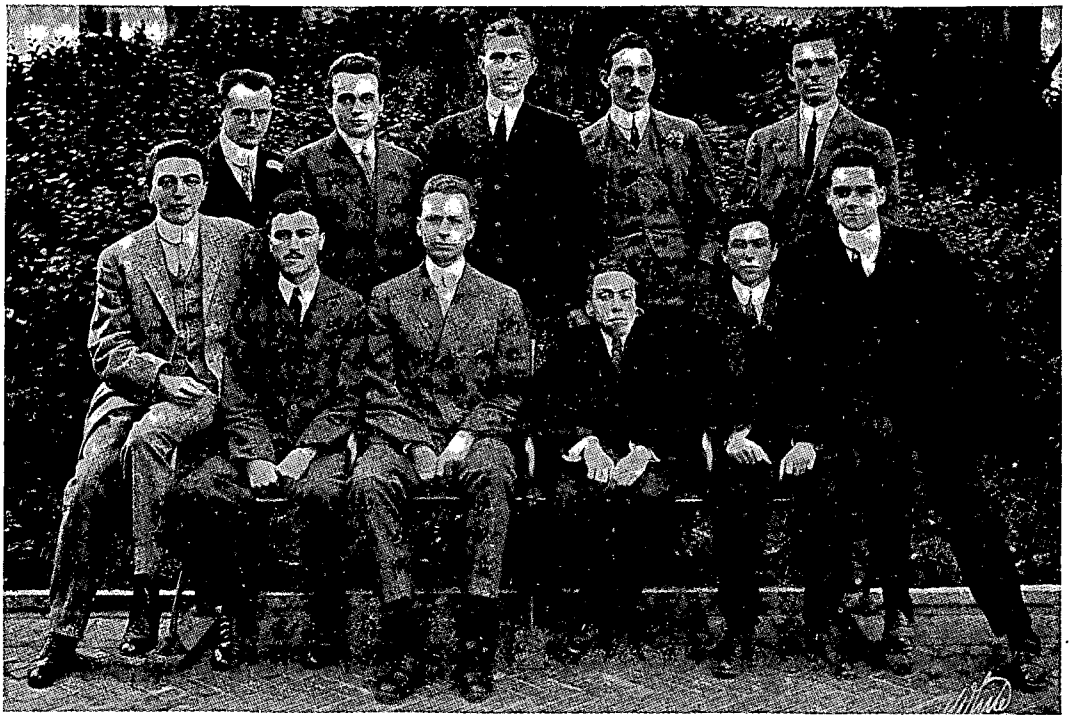

THE STAFF OF THE "COLUMBIA MONTHLY" IN 1912

Randolph Bourne, seated, third from the right, was the editor-in-chief that year. Directly behind him, with hands in pockets, is Alfred A. Knopf, the publisher, then the advertising manager of the Monthly. The tall figure in a dark suit next to Mr. Knopf is Carl Zigrosser, Bourne's roommate during his first years as a free-lance, 1914-1916.

was reading him—on "The Life of Irony", "The Excitement of Friendship", "The Experimental Life", "The Dodging of Pressures", all to be later included in *Youth and Life*. Most puzzlingly, he presented his own philosophy in "The Social Order in an American Town".

This essay, analyzing his native society, though not of course by name, may be taken to mark his real break with it. The article was witheringly noticed by the Newark *Sunday Call*, but damnation by headlines was probably less disheartening to him than the simple inability of his own people to get what he was driving at. What he blamed in the hereditary ruling class of his town was not parochialism but a profit-mindedness that he thought ate into the foundations of loyalty to the soil, the group. That essay and a later one about the local Italian settlement which appeared in the *New Republic* have been as much forgotten as the town plan drawn up by him as a letter to the editor of the local paper. Currency was readily achieved, however, by his first published piece, written at twenty-five, the essay on "The Two Generations", which was reprinted in *Youth and Life* and again in 1923 in the posthumous *History of a Literary Radical*. As lately as June 1930 it was again quoted, by Mr. Seward Collins of THE BOOKMAN, who made it the backbone of his indictment of Bourne as a "sociological critic", and victim of the romantic idea of "youth".

After that first period of contributorship to the *Atlantic* Bourne had a graduate year in

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A BOURNE HOMESTEAD

Randolph Bourne's own home in Bloomfield has been torn down; it was a modest house around the corner from the one shown, which belonged to an uncle. The autobiographical fragment published in his "History of a Literary Radical" refers to the cousins who lived here. The white house in the background belonged to another uncle.

residence at the University, following which he was awarded the Gilder Fellowship. This he used in characteristically original fashion for travel in Europe, 1913-14. His journeyings had taken him to Berlin at the outbreak of the war, and the bias already given to his views on life and letters by observation of German municipal planning must have been dramatically warped by the scenes of pomp which he witnessed in Unter den Linden. The spectacle of the Kaiser addressing crowds from a balcony, the uniforms and martial music, all must have given him a first taste of the thrills of jingoism from a side which was later to be anathematized by his own people. Just how sympathetic a hundred-percent American could at that time feel toward the Germans without any doubt of his own civic worth may be observed in a recent novel of Dorothy Canfield's, *The Deepening Stream;* the character to be noticed there is the heroine's brother, the heroine herself serving as mouthpiece of a pronounced Gallic partisanship that found American support spiritually inadequate even at its strongest. Just how thoroughly one who was to be branded as pro-German could appreciate the opposed virtues of the French bourgeoisie may on the other hand be measured by Bourne's review of a volume of sketches of French life; this was published in the *New Republic* early in 1917.

The Randolph Bourne who could write those forgotten pieces about his home town, about its past which belonged to the tradition of New England Puritanism and about its future which has already become the predominantly collectivist present, was so American, so libertarian, so much the eighteenth-century revolutionary, that he was bound to give the devil his due—unable to slow the stirring of the blood that answers drum-taps whether from our own side or the enemy's, and equally unwilling in the end

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to acquiesce silently in the suspected motives behind the regimentation to which our own drums coerced us. We shall not be thinking of him as his most vocal public has thought of him, but we shall have a good deal of plausibility with us, if we think of him as the Revolutionary small-town American, suspicious and finally embattled for his freedom, for everybody's freedom, for freedom in general, against the subtle formalism and self-deceiving hypocrisy of that caste which appeared to him to be joining hands in towns and cities across our country as its prototype had done so fatally in Europe.

From the time that Bourne came back to the States in 1914, establishing himself meagerly in a model tenement on Thirty-first Street near Avenue A, where he lived with Carl Zigrosser, he pursued the uneasy path of the literary free lance until his death shortly after the armistice in 1918. He joined the staff of the *New Republic* at its foundation; there he found reviewing to do and characters in high places to sketch. The influence of John Dewey was precipitating changes in the public-school system that Bourne felt impelled to investigate on the spot, in Gary, Indiana. Two books on education were published by Bourne: *The Gary Schools* in 1916 and *Education and Living* in 1917. In the thesis of the latter, that "by closing off the school and boxing up learning we have really smothered education", is implicit the repudiation of Dewey's instrumentalism to which he was finally moved. A sympathetic analysis of that repudiation was made by Mr. Lewis Mumford in *The Golden Day* in 1926.

BLOOMFIELD CENTRE IN BOURNE'S DAY

The crowds are celebrating a firemen's carnival. The site of the big tent was occupied by the building of the Trust Company in 1912; this in turn gave way to a skyscraper in 1930, following a merger of banks. (From "Bloomfield: Real and Ideal".)

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As the war shadow deepened, lurid lights fell on those who did not subscribe to the entire program of whatever group they were affiliated with. In the last writings published during his life, the notorious war papers, Bourne was to trace the quirks by which New Republicans became new imperialists. The columns of the *New Republic* gradually closed to him. Later the weekly *Dial* subjected him to a similar ostracism, and a literary magazine returned a manuscript on a neutral subject because of its editor's divergence from his political views. In climax, the flaming essays on the War and war psychology are said to have cost the fledgling *Seven Arts* its patroness. Waldo Frank, who was active on its board, says in *The Re-discovery of America* that "the organ's disappearance after one year is not due to the War, as is commonly supposed, but to the war between the individuals of the group" who ran it—"to their mutual distrusts and spiritual failures". Bourne's responsibility for the dissolution has, however, passed into canon.

To review his writings about his own town is to become convinced that, whatever generalities he may have wound up with, Bourne began as a lover of the wine of tradition of which Bloomfield was the vessel. Nietzsche somewhere says that great men belong not to the beginning but to the end of periods, and this observation applies to Randolph Bourne in as much as his emotional and instinctive alignment was with the Americanism of Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman. The temper of his modernity was a flare from an earlier fire. He looked toward collectivism for the guarantee of individual freedom and responsibility in our new conditions. To be for collectivism as a social method was, for him, to be in opposition to industrialism, imperialism, and instrumentalism, which were the immediate and regnant applications of that method. He was a socialist—or, to use a term over which there may be less quarrel of definition, he was a radical, from the conventional American individualist point of view—simply because he was a libertarian in much more than ordinary degree.

Something of this aspect of Bourne's personality and writing has been caught and fixed in print by apparently only one person. That is Mrs. Elsie Clews Parsons, who reviewed his posthumous *Untimely Papers* in the *Dial* of March 1920 under the happy title, "A Pacifist Patriot". Her beautiful job of reporting and appraisal there seems to have fallen unnoticed; yet it is the only piece by friend or foe that does not trip on the temptation of sentimentality or that of easy cynicism toward him. Mr. Collins, too, deserves the thanks of those who feel concern for Bourne's good reputation, because, even though by way of attack, he does see him as something more than pacifist. Those whose writing about Bourne is most remembered appear to have been unaware of him in any other aspect than that. James Oppenheim, the editor of the *Seven Arts*, was the obvious person to write a Foreword to *Untimely Papers*, a collection of the essays in criticism of the War which had originally appeared in his magazine. Even before that, Mr. Oppenheim had unhappily done his utmost to attach a halo to him as a pacifist martyr by his poetic eulogy in the *Liberator* shortly after Bourne died. The poem was revived in 1929 by Alfred Kreymborg in his anthological critique, *Our Singing Strength*. It is stupid enough to be quoted again as a horrid example, but lack of space prevents.

Mr. Kreymborg, as editor of *Others*, one of the little magazines that were the wonder of their pre-War day, and as lyrist, should be able to give a picture of his own of Bourne.

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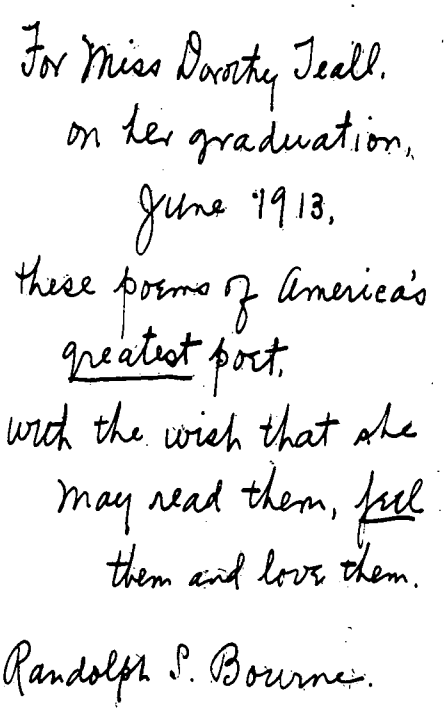
But his note does not carry us beyond the familiar myth. He calls Bourne a cripple, which he certainly was not, though unable to enjoy a fully active physical life. This notion of his appearance, and Mr. Oppenheim's description of him as having the innocent blue eyes of a child, have become freighted with psychic significances and incorporated in the myth; but neither of them as used really fits the man.

In the *Untimely Papers* foreword Mr. Oppenheim quoted Van Wyck Brooks on Bourne. He recalls Mr. Brooks's mention of Bourne as "of that type of proletarian aristocrat which is coming into being". In this phrase about Bourne is a concept of the American past which might well prove useful. The notion of such a type is much apter in relation to the classic Americanism of our beginnings than as applied to developments of the present day or the near past. With the proliferation of wealth and population in this country it has become all too easy for the socially well placed to forget the recent washtubs that Mr. Mencken would like to see blazoned on their coats-of-arms like a bar sinister. The temptation of the new rich and the not so new rich is to assume a grandeur that is merely windy and therefore horribly susceptible to pricking. The effort to outfly the usually proletarian state of their beginnings is too desperate to keep them soaring in the atmosphere of any aristocracy of mind. On the other hand, the purchase price of Thoreau's highly aristocratic thought was acceptance of living-conditions of proletarian simplicity, while in Emerson the type of proletarian aristocrat found exalted expression. It is just possible that Mr. Brooks's remark on the rise of such a type is substantiated by the transfer of what were formerly qualities peculiar to English-descended Americans to more recently infused strains—a process



A BOURNE AUTOGRAPH

The gift of a book of Whitman's poems began Randolph Bourne's friendship with the author of this article.

which is shadowed forth in Edna Ferber's novel, *American Beauty*. At any rate the phrase signifies, in the case of Bourne, primarily a connection with the country's great past rather than any novel and unprecedented phenomenon.

Mr. Brooks's personal views on Bourne were expanded in the introduction which he wrote for *The History of a Literary Radical*. Here he reinforced the Oppenheim colouring of Bourne's portrait by saying that "wistful" occurs again and again in his writing like a secret signature. His special contribution to the myth was a minimizing of Bourne's pacifist writings in favour of the creative work which he assumed would have come from him had he lived. It is time to reckon coolly with such fanciful consummations of Bourne's career. Undeniably, as he lived he

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was no early-flowering Keats or Shelley. He was a publicist engaged in criticism of American letters and life, not a poet and not a novelist. The lost manuscript of a nearly finished book, referred to by his friends who saw it as a novel, is no ground for changing this sentence. The nearest he came to fiction in any of his published work was a piece which he frankly entitled "An Autobiographic Chapter" and several character-sketches. The portraits of Nicholas Murray Butler and John Erskine which appear in *A Literary Radical* as "One of Our Conquerors" and "The Professor" display acumen of the fictionist's sort; these men are still richly recognizable to us in Bourne's delineations.

A great gulf is fixed between such a marked gift as Bourne showed for the appraisal of personality and real production as a novelist. Let us regard the matter coldly. Bourne does not stand to lose anything real by such a consideration; perhaps his true fame will even gain a little from a criticism which starts from a definition of our solid American possessions. We have often lost the benefit of the work our best men have actually achieved by our too great readiness to take a slight essay for a philosophic system, an autobiography for an epic. Why should men like Frank Moore Colby and Albert Jay Nock be wasted on encyclopaedic and journalistic enterprises of something less than first importance? Lincoln Steffens, after long years out of sight, comes to view again with a story of his life that is certainly literature but of which we shall as certainly lose the benefit if we are content to praise it as a modern classic without heeding well and being ready to supersede its warnings against premature fixation. Either a literature is occupation for the whole man or it is evidence that the society producing it is fragmented and content with rhetorical exercises in place of poetry and prophecy. Some failure lies at the core of the nation when fine literary talents present in great numbers the spectacle of careers burnt out before physical life is done. The old Greeks who thought birth was an occasion for sobriety, death as good as the one certain event that might not be capped by worse, might have smiled, albeit ruefully, over an end like Bourne's. Cut off in youth, he for one, among his contemporaries and in the larger company of American men of letters, could never outlive himself.

The men on whom the War fell in the flower of their maturing have been referred to as the lost generation. We can see why with some vividness when we think of the names which came into prominence on the staff of the *Seven Arts* and also of the *New Republic*, with which Bourne was associated as a contributing editor on its inception in 1914. Where are most of them in literature today? The most active and effective of the lot is probably Walter Lippmann. That white-headed boy of the *New Republic* might be appraised today as the clever and subtle spokesman of a subtler and cleverer worldliness—or call it adjustment, call it opportunism—than any that Americans were generally ready for prior to 1914. Put in the simplest terms, this judgment would hardly be dissented from by Mr. Lippmann himself. In 1914 and thereafter, we all, and especially the Wilsonian liberals, cheered ourselves with the delusion of a great mission in the world. We supposed that we could save democracy by taking thought. We supposed, a good many of us, that the Russian Revolution would release a flood of communistic peace and plenty by an initial act of will. We plowed our furrow and sowed it with the wind. Perhaps it is only today that we

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realize how truly such seedtime must lead to a harvest of whirlwind. The instruments we seek to use become our masters and use us. Paradoxically enough, after decrying the critics who fastened the label of pacifist on Bourne, it ought to be admitted that it was his immediate perception of such danger in American involvement in the War and his consequent repudiation of it that was his great glory. His essential Americanism consisted in the courage to be un-American enough to say what many admitted only as an obscure spiritual discomfort.

Whether Bourne was in fact a martyr to his cause, as Mr. Kreymborg, following Mr. Oppenheim, asserts, may be regarded as doubtful. His physical equipment would not have been favourable to a long life under the happiest of circumstances; under the stress of pneumonia it was bound to succumb. Certainly if an early death was fated for him, it came at the best of times for his fame. The coincidence of his dying a mere six weeks after the armistice had the effect of arresting him in the attitude of his wartime protest. There is only one reason to regret the immediate reputation which attached itself to him as a pacifist; that is that his real importance to us today and for the future, although it depends on the qualities of mind and temper which led to his protest, is not primarily that of protestant against the late War. As Mrs. Parsons has beautifully pointed out, his wrath and scorn were for the liberals who pictured themselves as having willed our participation in it. She insists that "as an unmitigated intellectual, his understanding of irrational groups, wage-earner as well as millionaire, remained limited"; "of the emotions that take the place of thought he had little grasp". She admits that "how meagre a part thought plays in social life he came in a measure to understand", and this admission, though made perhaps a little grudgingly and in passing, may be taken as support for the view that at the end Randolph Bourne—like the Tolstoy of *War and Peace*, like the Blake who said, "Fire and the sword are portions of eternity too great for the eye of man"—was largely convinced that the great movements of history, wars and migrations, are acts of God, strictly speaking, rather than acts of any man or men.

Mrs. Parsons has remarked that Bourne believed a plebiscite would have shown the body of the people to be opposed to the War, in spite of what she took to be ample signs that they were acquiescent. She interprets this belief as part of the larger failure to allow for the irrational elements in society. She is probably right, so far as Bourne's pronouncements and underlying attitude toward the war are concerned. She begins, however, by saying that he would have "repudiated the rôle of Cassandra—except perhaps in his moments of malice; he was too ardent and vital a person to linger among emotions no longer fresh and too much the artist to be trapped into self-exploitation". The War once past, he would have found new nuts to crack. What we need to hold in mind today if his work is to be of use to us is that the moment of control in human affairs is everywhere of the briefest and can be used only by those who are in the habit of heeding the voices of their personal demons. The moment once gone, we become instruments of our own decisions, not directors. Today, the necessities of collective action and individuals' parts in it having released their stranglehold on our thinking about the War, it is possible even for an official spokesman of the Department of State to refer to it as a carnival of wastage. Randolph Bourne's protest has been fully sub-

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stantiated. That frees us to begin thinking of him apart from it. Such courage as his will always be rare; rarer still its combination with sound insights. But life presents no situations without a moment in which courage and insight could not make some slight impression on the situations into which they resolve.

When Mr. Lewis Mumford contributed a piece called "Image of Randolph Bourne" to the *New Republic* of September 24, 1930, what he presented was not a picture but a demand for one. Constructing a usable Randolph Bourne will involve first a resurvey of the current images. It has been noted that Mr. Kreymborg, following Mr. Oppenheim, speaks of him as a cripple; Mr. Oppenheim uses his deformity for a symbol. This theme has been variously taken up by Mr. Paul Rosenfeld and Miss Babette Deutsch; in her novel, *A Brittle Heaven,* Miss Deutsch pictures Bourne under the alias of Mark Gideon.

Mr. Rosenfeld, in his essay about him in *Port of New York,* published in 1924, anticipated Miss Deutsch's slight obliquities which not only make Bourne lame but use even a cockroach as symbolic if it happens to crawl under his bookcase. In Mr. Rosenfeld's case they were more serious because they were more explicit. He enlarges the symbolizing process to take in the society from which Bourne sprang. He alludes to him as a cripple, and this, as I have already pointed out, he was not. In Bourne was to be seen rather a terrible heightening of the artist's and the scholar's typical handicap of low or uneven vitality. Mr. Rosenfeld, offspring of the city and its wealth, suggests further that Bourne was a mental outcast of his native group. He says: "His terrible discomfort resulted . . . from the resistance of lower-middle-class life to the life of ideas and spiritual distinction". Bourne was related on his father's side to a line of ministers by no means undistinguished in New Jersey's annals; on his mother's, to two lawyers who had a real stake in the community and were leaders more than followers; his ancestry was certainly not of the lower middle class. As for the circumstances under which he and his brother and sisters grew up, they would have constricted his pride with less discomfort if that had been less stiffened by ideas and spiritual distinction, which for him must be admitted to derive from an outmoded Puritanism. Perhaps any Puritanism would strike Mr. Rosenfeld as the antithesis of ideas and spiritual distinction, but as it appeared in Randolph Bourne's family and local setting it cannot be denied whatever validity may attach to doubt and search, which are hardly stigmata of the lower middle class. Indeed the Protestant and democratic tradition is bound to generate criticism from within itself, and that strength is perhaps also its great vulnerability, which may make its inheritors glad at last to surrender their questionings into the hands of faith and dictatorship.

All the various points of iconography and psychography that figure in the Bourne myth may be found united in Mr. Waldo Frank's *Our America* of 1919 and briefly summed up again in his *Re-discovery of America* in 1929. In the first of these books, which presents a fairly full picture, the high lights are very white and the shadows utterly pitchy. A tangential reflection of this image occurs in Dr. Harold Rugg's *Culture and Education* as late as 1931. Possibly Professor Parrington would have done something to correct these distortions, but unfortunately the scheme which he had worked out for his final volume of *Main Currents in American Thought* includes in its great gaps the period in which Bourne figured. Meanwhile an op-

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position to the Bourne of myth is arising even outside of the humanistic sphere of influence. Mr. Allen Tate, reviewing Miss Millay's *Fatal Interview* for the *New Republic*, speaks of her as belonging to a generation dominated by Randolph Bourne and says of it: "It has been called the age of experiment and liberation; there is still experiment, but no one is liberated; and that age is now dead". Mr. Eastman was moved, a year or two ago, to defend Bourne against aspersions as a toy of emotion by the Hemingway following who regard their man of the hour as an exemplar of intellect. This is no novel demonstration that a man may be praised and damned for the same qualities, or even that a writer's expression may be judged as a setting forth of qualities diametrically opposed. What it does demonstrate with some clarity is that Randolph Bourne's thought is still alive, still effective.

A fruitful exercise of that critical prognostication which was often Bourne's mood would be the extension and possibly the termination of the lines started in his sadly fragmentary work. Sinclair Lewis put a period to simple denunciation of Main Street in his novel of that name; let us supply future fictional manipulators of the scene with a check on the hopeful predictions which Bourne made for it. Fifteen years of experiment in education should by now have poured into adult life a fresh stream of human material, by whose performance the value of these trends might be gauged; let us see whether that supplies the new advance guard that Bourne looked for. The League of Nations has passed from liberal dream into actuality; let us consider whether the world is more peaceful because of it, or whether its performance shows us that we really desire such peace as we were bidden to fight for. Here are hints of a very small number of the themes which aroused Bourne and which are at work today in the world with which the creative writer deals. Events should have supplied the answer by now to many of his questions. But most important, to those who knew him, would be a recapture of his personal quality, a sustainment of that tireless research into what is fair and good to you and me here and now as the one firm rock on which to rear a life that may be good and fair. Essential to a splendid future is an effort at understanding of the personal and social past and an application of what light we have to our immediate present. Such an essay of Bourne's as the paper on Newman, in *The History of a Literary Radical*, will show how sympathetic a backward glance may be thrown from the standpoint of an active radicalism. And by way of counterbalance to the Greenwich Village interpretation of Bourne as martyr let us bear in mind the remark of the editor of his town's paper, in whose recollection Bourne's antiseptic probe of the persons about him issues as something like a sweetness of manner: for "while he set up to be a ferocious radical when he wrote, he wouldn't have hurt a fly. That way he was like John Henry Cardinal Newman, the gentlest of men, if you just took him when he wasn't writing".

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A PORTFOLIO

ABOLISH REVIEWERS

by Storm Jameson

THERE is a certain under-sea disturbance in the writing world. Little eddies come to the surface and burst there in the form of paragraphs and sinister notes. Mr. Frank Swinnerton leaned over and like a delicate angel troubled the waters with one chapter of his *Authors and the Book Trade*. Mr. Wyndham Lewis (the angry one) is standing by to fling in a brick with his forthcoming essay, *A Tip from the Augean Stables*. A fortnight ago a journalist who is perhaps too young to know better, made a reference to the unsatisfactory state of reviewing. He was very cautious—for which he is to be commended—and he said less than we all know. Of course reviewing is in a rotten state, more especially the reviewing of fiction. Of course reviewers are influenced by all kinds of considerations that ought not to influence them but do. But there is no cure for this state of affairs.

Think. We will pretend that young Mr. A—whose taste in literature is impeccable, who is well-read in the world's best fiction, who is without malice and without fear, who has never spoken to a writer in his life—is given the novel reviewing of a Sunday newspaper. How, since he is without friends or acquaintances in the literary world, he has contrived to be offered the job I do not know. Perhaps an angel appeared to the proprietor in a dream and said: "Send for young Mr. A, who is living in a bed-sitting-room in Balham with nothing to do but fill his fountain-pen and play with his landlady's cat".

By some means Mr. A is installed. He is at first appalled by the number of novels which pour from the publishing houses. They cascade on his head like so many tons of ink. But he is conscientious, as well as inexperienced, and he resolves to do his duty by them. He begins to read. He is at first incredulous, then shocked, then stunned by the realization that nine out of ten of these numberless volumes have no single quality to commend them to a reader of taste. The tenth, he is willing to admit, shows traces of having been written by a novelist who is neither an imbecile nor a vulgarian. But—and here he tries to shake off the dazing effects of his plunge into the stream of fiction—compare even these superior products with the novels of Thackeray, Jane Austen, Fielding, Tolstoy. Fatal thought! No sooner does he attempt the comparison than all but one of his selected few vanish in a smell of candle-grease and old clothes. He takes up his pen and writes an article which expresses his horror and alarm at the state of contemporary fiction. Why, he demands, did Mr. Blank, the publisher, who enjoys the reputation of an intelligent man, publish last week no less than six novels, not one of which is worth the attention of a serious reader? Who is responsible for the legend that Mr. X is a distinguished novelist? Why? Who? . . . He cannot get down his indignant questions quickly enough. The article, by another miraculous intervention, appears on Sunday.

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On Monday the harassed man whose business it is to solicit publishers' advertisements wants to know how he can be expected to persuade Mr. Blank to renew his double column for a further three months. Mr. A is cautioned. He reads another score of novels and repeats his offence. The next day he is sitting in his bedroom in Balham filling his fountain-pen and playing with the landlady's cat. His career is over.

But, you cry, this Mr. A is a young monster. He had only to read with less inflated expectations and more charity to discover thoughtful, competent, charming novels by the score. True. Leaving Mr. A to starve to death let us set young Mr. B in his place. Mr. B is as well-read and discriminating, but there is not a stain of arrogance in his disposition, and he has written a novel and knows how difficult it is. He reviews Mr. X's novel with a warm appreciation of its charm and brilliance—only at the end he lets fall a vague wistful doubt. Is it—remembering Thackeray, Tolstoy and all these—is it a work of genius? Mr. X is sensitive and grateful for real criticism. He longs to deserve young Mr. B's good opinion, and he writes a charming friendly letter acknowledging, explaining, questioning—and inviting Mr. B to lunch to discuss the questions more intimately. Mr. B goes and is delighted by the great man's reception of him. He goes again and meets other novelists. All without exception are charming unaffected fellows. His circle of friends widens daily. And now that he sees how hard they all try and what good companions they are he discerns more and finer merits in their novels. The flaws are not worth calling attention to. And in the meantime Mr. X has busied himself in getting a publisher to accept Mr. B's novel. It appears, with a word of praise from the distinguished novelist. Gratitude is added to Mr. B's emotions. He is now an established member of the literary world, giving and receiving invitations. His outlook mellows. Infrequently he comes across a novel (by some unknown hand) which stirs his old critical fire. He breathes on it and it is scorched up. One day as he motors through Balham to stay in the country with dear old X he passes a workhouse from which a coffin is being carried. Mr. A.

But what are you going to do about it? Newspapers and weeklies must have advertisements in order to live. Pages of reviews that have no "selling pull" are so much dead weight round a paper's neck. Nor is Mr. B, now middle-aged and genial, wantonly dishonest. He is only retaining his seat and helping his friends—both laudable aims. In the circumstances—editors being shackled to their advertisement managers and critics only human beings liking to be liked—what can you expect but reviewing that is less than honest?

The only remedy is to abolish reviewing altogether. Let publishers advertize their wares like honourable tradesmen without expecting to see them puffed in the editorial columns. Mr. B will have to find another job, but the air will be the clearer for his going. Novelists who are now wasting precious hours reading other men's books will not be sorry to be relieved from that obligation. Ask one of them, if you hesitate to believe me.

WHAT HAPPENS TO "BEST SELLERS"?

by P. F. Loewen

RECENTLY a mid-western university professor, having lectured on the familiar subject of *Literature and Life* before a ladies' club, was asked by an ap-

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parently curious young lady, "Professor Adams, what do you think of so-and-so?", naming the "best seller" of the month. The professor, perhaps in agreement with James Branch Cabell's opinion that intelligent persons do not keep up with contemporary literature, was obliged to respond, "My dear, I do not know the book".

The young lady was chagrined. Here was a man who professed to be a scholar, and yet he was obliged to confess complete ignorance of a book which was the subject of animated conversation among her cultured associates.

Six months later Professor Adams again found himself in the midst of the same ladies' club, but this time he had armed himself by reading all the "best sellers" of the preceding half year. Likewise he made it a point to express his opinion on the novel in question to the lady who had shown interest in it only recently. To the dismay of the professor, the young lady had no knowledge of having read the book and was obliged to face Professor Adams with characteristic vacancy of expression.

Alas! Such is frequently the fate of the "best seller". The baseless fabric of the insubstantial modern novel oft leaves not a rack behind in the minds of a superficial reading public which is interested in a book only as long as it is the subject of conversation in social circles.

What then becomes of the "best seller" of ten, twenty, and thirty years ago? To determine this the writer sent out questionnaires to a number of large public libraries in all parts of the country, asking the librarian to check the extent to which each of twenty "best sellers" published between 1901 and 1921 had been read in the last five years. The librarian was asked to indicate whether the books specified were drawn for reading "frequently" (that is, two or three times a month), "occasionally" (about once in two months), or "seldom"—if at all. No book in the third classification would be drawn more than three times a year.

The results of this survey of twenty "best sellers" reveal some interesting characteristics of the American reading public. The reports show unanimously that Zane Grey's *Man of the Forest*, "best seller" of 1920, is still read frequently from Boston to Los Angeles and from Fargo, North Dakota, to New Orleans. The verdict on Tarkington's amusing and gentle satire on Willie Baxter's puppy love affairs in *Seventeen* (1916) is likewise unanimous for frequent reading. Next in order of popularity are Mary Roberts Rinehart's sentimental *Amazing Interlude* (1918), John Fox's *Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come* (1904), Gene Stratton Porter's ultra-sentimental *Harvester* (1912), Fox's *Trail of the Lonesome Pine* (1909), Alice Hegan Rice's genial *Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch* (1902), and, most amazing, Florence Barclay's *The Rosary* (1910), a novel that we thought was dead, dealing with the love-motif of Nevin's composition by the same name. The hero, a young artist, falls in love with a homely-faced girl who refuses him because of her imperfection, and before the reconciliation he goes blind.

These eight novels, according to the reports of eighty-five per cent of the libraries included in this survey, are still read frequently. It will be noted that the element of sentimentality is common to all in varying degrees. With the possible exception of *Seventeen*, it would hardly be judicious to refer to any of them as important works of literature.

In contrast to these "best sellers" that still hold the interest of the reading public and are asked for in public libraries by author regardless of title, let us consider four former

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"best sellers" that are now dead beats. The deadest "best seller" of the years 1901 to 1921 is William Sydnor Harrison's *V.V.'s Eyes* (1913), a rather lengthy novel of social reform, dealing with the evils of unsafe factories and the blindness and greed of factory owners. Harrison's best novel, unless *Queed* deserves that distinction, is not so devoid of merit as to warrant such complete neglect, in view of the popularity of such third-rate novels as are included in the frequently read group. His subject is of transitory interest, but his treatment is commendable.

One Vaughan Kester's *Prodigal Judge* (1911) is based on an inconsequential Zane Grey or John Fox theme, but lacks the interest which the latter novelists seem to be able to command. It has rightly fallen into almost complete oblivion.

Next among the dead is Francis Macauley's *The Lady of the Decoration* (1907), a very short and ephemeral diary of a love affair in letter form. The heroine is a young widow who leaves civilization to teach in a Japanese missionary school. The hero is a dream-boy sailor. Apparently the plot is today too naïve even for an American public.

The fourth in this group of novels seldom if ever called for is Winston Churchill's *Inside of the Cup* (1914), an absorbing account of the problems of a young minister in a rich metropolitan church. Although at the time of publication Griffin Mace, writing in THE BOOKMAN, was of the opinion that its success would undoubtedly continue, the book has been almost totally neglected. Churchill's novel is for a thinking public and deserves a better fate.

I shall make only a few comments on the remaining eight novels, which constitute the group called for occasionally in our public libraries. Here we find several which warrant praise. Tarkington's *The Turmoil* (1915) probably shows greater literary skill than any of the "best sellers" of twenty years. It is not as universal in appeal as *Seventeen*, to be sure, but it is written with felicity and deals with an absorbing subject—the failure of Mr. Sheridan's two successful sons, and the success of the peculiar Bibbs, the black sheep of the family, who at first seems doomed to certain failure. Edith Wharton's *House of Mirth* (1906), though inferior to her *Age of Innocence*, is worthy of the name of a classic of the second order. Señor Ibáñez's passionate hatred for all things German no doubt will prove the greatest fault in his *Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* (1919). Written during the heat and turmoil of the war, the Spaniard's tendency to colour his material for propaganda purposes is too much in evidence.

Katherine Thurston's *Masquerader* (1905) presents a fascinating plot in which a poor hack-writer and an M. P. exchange identity, the latter being an opium addict and unable to maintain his aplomb consistently. One puts the book aside feeling that he has gone through an unusually absorbing but rather improbable experience.

Maurice Thompson's *Alice of Old Vincennes* (1901), an excellent historical novel of the days of Lewis and Clark; Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Shuttle* (1908); and H. G. Wells's *Mr. Britling Sees it Through* are the remaining novels that have an occasional call.

The replies to this questionnaire also tended to indicate that place of residence has little to do with the reading taste of the American public. Boston appears to be most conservative, the librarian having listed seven of the twenty novels in the "seldom read" column, although the five "frequently read" novels are likewise the favourites of the public in other sections of the country. The libraries of Chicago and Portland, Oregon, did not

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find that any of the twenty novels were neglected to the extent of deserving the "seldom read" classification.

Casual observation of the fate of these twenty novels in college and university libraries reveals the fact that many of them are no longer to be found at all, and that the greater majority of those available fall into the "seldom read" category. Either the college student does not read the older novels at all, or he is more discriminating in his choice of leisure reading than the general public.

THOUGHTS ABOUT WRITING

by Phyllis Bottome

MARY LAMB said "a book's a book": and there was an end to it—but in her day no one had thought of book-writing as a method of passing the time. To a real writer, a book is not a hobby, but an organic substance, possessing both body and soul. The true writer has something he thinks worth saying and he wants very urgently to say it.

The desire to be a writer because one thinks it an easy way of making money or because one is not sufficiently appreciated at home, does not—even today—take one very far. But, granted the inspiration, "How", asks the wistful amateur of all the ages, "does one write a book?"

When and how to write are mere questions of personal idiosyncrasy. Some writers can only write secluded on an island, with their entire household reverently paralyzed about them. Others prefer being surrounded by excited people in a café, if possible during a revolution.

All writers are likely to write better if not exposed to direct address. When a friend says, "I know I'm interrupting you but—" or worse still, "I'm not interrupting you, am I?" the writer can only wish that he had chosen some other profession, "Chicago May's", for instance.

Most professional writers write regularly, and treat inspiration like a maid-of-all-work who has to be constantly supervised.

The mere fact of working at the same time, in the same room and sitting in the same chair helps to quicken mental response. Habit is a help in all tough jobs, and if a writer takes his work at all seriously writing is bound to be a tough job.

Shelley asserted that a work of art should pass through two processes, one spontaneous, which should be given free vent without correction or check, and one analytical, which should take place in cold blood after the excitement of inspiration has died down.

It is a general, if not invariable rule, that hard writing makes easy reading. Most people find that they can improve on their first drafts. The more obscure and profound the writer's thought is, the clearer should be his expression of it. A writer should never give his reader more trouble than he can help. The reader must be stimulated to think, but he should never be obliged to think because the writer has not thought enough.

A writer is responsible for his style, but he is only indirectly responsible for his subject. It has nothing to do with his will, though it may have much to do with his personality. Subjects choose their author, and it is as unjust to blame an author for his choice of a subject as it would be to blame him if a tiger sprang on his back. All one can say is that he was a suitable object from the tiger's point of view.

Once his subject has sprung, he may, of course, put up any fight he likes; and a good critic should often be able to tell him better

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ways of tackling the animal. The best critics of all are other writers, who have had their own tigers to deal with. They know that even a bad novel is difficult to write, since it involves some method of construction, and a large amount of manual labour.

To be a good writer, to create a soul as well as a body demands a great deal more of its creator. A real writer wants to write just as a hungry person wants to eat. Life forces the artist's perceptive mind to reproduce its images. It is the quality of the passion an artist puts into his work which makes him a great or little artist. An engine can easily be as beautiful to him as a sunset sky; it is to Rudyard Kipling. Arnold Bennett could get up as much enthusiasm over baking a cake as over a guilty intrigue. The management of great hotels went to his head like raw brandy.

It is his intensity of vision which makes the poet a more creative artist than a prose writer. "The Laws of the Universe are always on the side of the most sensitive." The poet's wildly beating heart as well as his clear thinking brain drives his words into music. A prose writer writes to reveal his thoughts about the universe. A poet has to re-create the universe in order to write at all. What he does for the reader is to give him newness of life. A prose writer appeals to his reader's mind. A poet wakens that "inner eye which is the bliss of solitude".

There is another spiritual quality, which poet and prose writer should share alike, the quality of wonder. Robert Louis Stevenson said he could fall in love with any woman who was prepared to wonder all day long upon the mystery of the human eye-brow. Curiosity of this impersonal kind is the first step towards creative art.

Intensity and wonder take one far, but there must be a third spiritual gift in the writer's trinity—intellectual integrity. An artist may steal his widowed mother's savings to gamble with his cronies. He may do God-knows-what to his wife—or to the wives of other people, but he must accept the discipline of mental honesty, or his work will peter out.

To be convincing one must first be honestly convinced. The writer's whole being should be involved in the imaginative process. Beethoven said: "I am Bacchus, and my sorrows are the grapes which I tread out for mankind". Inaccuracy is a fault to be avoided, but truth to the imagination is the writer's life-blood.

In a novel the plot and construction of the story are both important, but the characters are vital. If a writer is true to his characters they will give him his plot; any character drawn with intensity, imagination, and integrity will reward its creator with a story. *Jane Eyre* made Charlotte Brontë's story for her as surely as Joan of Arc's character made the history of her contemporary—France. In both cases the heroine's character was sufficient plot.

People do not really have similar experiences, though the same things may happen to them, because while the experience is taking place, the characters are happening to the experience. There are said to be only five good plots in the world but there are as many stories as there are human beings, and no plot need sound stale if the writer gets sufficiently under the skin of his subject to present it from a fresh and vital point of view.

A good writer must be a keen observer either of himself or others. The greatest writers fuse these two fields of observation into one, and observe *both* themselves and others. Observation, however, must play second fiddle to integrity.

The artist must be a disinterested as well as an acute observer. He must not only spend

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his time finding out why people say and do what they say and do, but he must avoid being turned aside from the truth by his own casual likes and dislikes. Nothing is more tiresome in history, biography, or fiction than to find that the writer has a "down" on one of his characters, and that he is being urged by personal dislike to score off him. It is equally exasperating when an author makes a pet of one of his characters, and insists on smoothing out all natural lines, and giving to a faulty human being the false smoothness of a head on a chocolate-box.

One very good way of telling a good artist from a bad is this *parti-pris* about character. A great artist like George Moore never loads his dice against his characters. His figs come from figs and his thistles from thistles. His rain falls alike upon the just and the unjust without as much as a filched drop.

An artist may have convictions but he should never be allowed to use them as weapons.

It may sometimes happen that a great artist is forced off his course by the prejudices of his time. A great genius like Dickens was obliged to present his people in caricature and only now and then dared fling his inspiration direct upon the human soul, but no one who has read *David Copperfield* need doubt that he could do it. What a novel *Vanity Fair* would have been could Thackeray have written of Becky Sharp as she really was! *Vanity Fair* is a great novel, because a great artist wrote it, but Thackeray and Dickens were great artists shackled by the straight-jacket of their era.

Today we can say what we like, and should therefore—if we like it—find the truth accessible. Unfortunately the Anglo-Saxon mind is still sentimental, given to exaggeration or to becoming panic-stricken. It is never quite sure that that strange dog, emotion, will not bite as well as bark.

In all great works of art, the mind of the artist should shine out at us, without the blur of personal proclivities. His one preoccupation should be to show by clear and direct expression, the springs of human conduct and of human thought. Every artist has his individual vision of what the truth is, and when he has learned not to make his vision a personal matter he has reached full maturity.

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ROBERT NATHAN: POET AND IRONIST

by Roberts Tapley

"One must have faith, he liked to say, if one is to be an artist. But he did not know how to say what he meant by faith."—Professor Pembauer in *The Orchid*.

A RESIDENT at Harvard in the winter of 1913-1914, if he had followed the fortunes of the *Harvard Monthly*, would have been impressed by the recurrence upon its pages of five names that were later to become celebrated in a wider arena. These were Gilbert Seldes, Robert Hillyer, John Dos Passos, E. E. Cummings, and Robert Nathan. He would not perhaps have seen all the promise which we are led to believe must inhere in even the stumbling first efforts of genius. And certainly one would need to have been rarely gifted in order to be able to predict, on the basis of indications still so amorphous, the direction which five such different talents would take.

Could anything be more remote from the Dos Passos of our day than that morsel of oriental romanticism published in the *Monthly* with the title *The Honor of a Klepht*?

"Hush, speak not of the klephts," interrupted an old man among the crowd. "We have no reason to love them."

Could anything throw a stranger light on the highly individual work of the more mature E. E. Cummings than the stanzas replete with moonlight, pearls, harps, and roses which he was willing to dignify with his signature in 1914? As for Robert Hillyer:—

When o'er the dreary town the black smoke falls
And dims the dismal dwellings where exist
The sad-eyed victims of unending want
That slink despondent through the noontide mist. . . .

It would be an inexcusable cruelty to revive such dark passages were it not that they may enable many who have subsequently remained perfectly obscure to forgive themselves for like juvenile indiscretions. I recall some stanzas of my own which, together with a water-colour portrait of a grasshopper, were an early offering to the muses. Therein, with some elevation, I renounced many worldly advantages that had never been offered me. The peak of mundane elegance was represented for me at that time by smart equipages rolling "through streets in London Town", but it was my Wordsworthian preference

. . . in the grass to lie
And see the bluebird flutter by.

The two members of this rather unusual group of Harvard undergraduates who gave most indication of what they would later become were Gilbert Seldes and Robert Nathan. Seldes was already announcing his penchant for criticism in an article that opened somewhat grandiosely with the words: "This article deals frankly with ephemera". Ah, those blithe college days when one dared to be frank about "ephemera" and to keep them sternly in their place!

Robert Nathan contributed several poems to the *Monthly* and two one-act plays. The

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poems seem to me extraordinarily competent within their unambitious limits. Take these lines that describe a freight train passing at night:—

A red glow hissing in the night,
Then a long, long rush of darkness into the wind,
Clanking and grinding and bumping in slow rhythm,
A brutal, lonely power,—or a dream
From nowhere to nowhere.

Or the following, for a touch of the kind of humour in which their author was later to excel:—

Off on the road with hearts asong
And a little brown dog to patter along
In a fat little way.

But the moment one makes any reference to later work, one is faced with the difficulty that Robert Nathan has become almost famous without ever having been very well known. It is his singularity that, having to a very unusual degree perfected his art, and having been hailed ungrudgingly by reviewers and critics as a writer of rare achievement, he continues to be little read. I am judging not alone from available statistical data, which indicate at best a moderate commercial success; I am judging from the simple fact that I have been able to discover in a circle of reasonably well-informed acquaintances almost no one sufficiently acquainted with his books to be able to discuss them.

Few writers of fiction in America today are treated with a more uniform respect than Mr. Nathan enjoys. Few contemporary names are more honoured. Few personalities are more generally recognized as belonging to the inner circle of literary activity. Robert Nathan's name, thrown in with the names of Seldes, Dos Passos, Hillyer, and E. E. Cummings, weighs enough to preserve, if not to improve, a high average. Yet most amateurs of belles lettres, if faced with the necessity of saying a few well-chosen words about each of the five, would undoubtedly find Robert Nathan by far their most difficult subject. He has been, like the freight train described in the lines I have quoted, not a "brutal", but certainly a "lonely" power; and, so far as concerns any mark left upon the minds of a considerable public, he has been what he called, somewhat wryly even at that early date, "a dream from nowhere to nowhere". His course remains mysterious and uncharted, and one cannot quote from his juvenilia with the usual confidence that a fair number of readers will be able to contrast the glimpse they afford of the author in youth with any clearly formulated impression of what the author has made of himself in maturity.

One had best begin, therefore, by describing the literary domain of which Robert Nathan is the acknowledged, if somewhat neglected, master. And first of all it is necessary to define his position with relation to the kind of writing which, without regard for the strict historical meaning of the word, we are apt to call "realism".

Nine out of ten of our current serious novels deal with one or more of the familiar "problems": youth, business, education, marriage. The hero will be fighting a war, or recovering from shell-shock, or languishing in a swivel-chair; the heroine will be visiting the poor or possibly undergoing an undesired pregnancy. And the reader is brought right into the thick of it all. His breast is exposed to the laceration of the experiences recorded. His heart aches, his knees tremble, he endures all the reek and smother. Wells and Bennett wrote books that belong in this category. Wells and Bennett were youthful idols of Robert Nathan. He declares that,

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while other members of the staff of the *Harvard Monthly* raved about Baudelaire and Rimbaud and Anatole France, he was faithful to the canons of taste that were then widely popular and avoided Continental extravagances. It is natural, therefore, that his first novel should have been realistic.

It is called *Peter Kindred*. The heroine's name is Joan. Possibly in this choice of names the author intended to pay a tribute to Wells. Peter studies at Exeter Academy and later at Harvard. He and Joan, who is studying at Radcliffe, both imbibe the social philosophy of Professor Carver, who enjoys some prestige among serious-minded students. They then marry and settle in New York, where Peter had been born.

> The air was hot and lifeless in the subway; there was a stale smell of cigarettes and papers and dust. Peter's eyes widened. He had come home.

That is realism. One feels one is likely to find on the very next page rotting cabbage stumps lying about. And one has no right to resent it, because there are in "real" life lots of rotten cabbage stumps almost everywhere.

Mr. Nathan's Joan and Peter marry and set out to lead a strictly Carverian existence. But unfortunately for Carverian optimism the only opening for a bright young man is in advertising. The scant income that Peter is able to wring from long hours of distasteful labour is due to his self-abandon in telling lies about canned goods. Joan has to help out by getting a stenographic position. Both have fully intended to postpone having a child until they have demonstrated their Carverian fitness. But being in the grip of love, and what with one thing and another, they occasionally lose their hold on the Carverian system. Consequences:—a still-born child; a woman whose health has been permanently impaired; a husband gnashing his teeth because in the Carverian heaven there is no God that he can defy.

II

Having furnished a far from contemptible example of realistic writing, Mr. Nathan washed his hands of the type. There are several ways of departing from realism. An author may turn sentimental and affirm, as a Warwick Deeping might be expected to do, that the advertising business is an important contributor to the glory of God and His Kingdom. This would be to abdicate intelligence. Mr. Nathan's refusal to budge from his skepticism in such matters is apparent in the following epigram from his pen.

> *Soon the dairy companies,*
> *In unusual liveries,*
> *Will attempt to furnish sunny*
> *Heaven all its milk and honey.*

And while we are noting the inroads of doubt in his mind it may be well to cite a few more of these poems in brief. This, for instance, on education:—

> Laws, manuals, and texts
> Incline us
> To cheat with plus
> And rob with minus.

As for art, or specifically the poet:—

> He lives on pain,
> And sells his utter
> Grief for roses,
> Bread and butter.

No, this writer has not grown tender-minded, at least not to the exclusion of an occasional shrewd insight into the vanity of most of our human pretensions. Only he no longer suffers, or makes us suffer, in the way that the realists do. The explanation will be found in the airy lightness of tone that pre-

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vails in these epigrams. He has not muffled his intelligence; he has muffled his emotions, at least such of them as are painful. He is following the advice that his own Professor Pembauer gives (in *The Orchid*) to the children who come to him for piano lessons:—

"You must learn to control yourself, you must have some repose. If you have emotions, you should do something else with them, not play the piano."

Crudely and rigidly applied, this doctrine would give us literary works not unlike some of Aldous Huxley's. But a writer of natural warmth and a good digestion cannot wholly suppress his emotions. Mr. Nathan, in point of fact, practises wise discrimination. After *Peter Kindred* he wrote seldom in sorrow or anger. He has not changed his views; he has altered his emphasis. He has found it possible to withdraw into worlds less disfigured by cabbage stumps. It is his privilege to range freely through space and time and eternity, as freely, within the limits of his scholarship, as the author of *Thaïs* did. No one could be more modest than Mr. Nathan is about his own erudition; yet it is clear to any reader of his stories that he has a fine taste in rare and curious knowledge. And no author who has laid his scene once in Heaven (*There is Another Heaven*) and has thrust an archangel into the middle of another volume (*The Bishop's Wife*) and has mapped the psychology of a minor prophet (*Jonah*) and conversed with children and dolls (*The Puppet Master*) and consorted with poodles and fighting cocks (*The Fiddler in Barly*) needs to suffer unduly from the "ache of the actual".

Next after Nathan's first novel, *Peter Kindred,* came *Autumn*. It is the first of a series of three rural fantasies that form a continuous narrative. The sequels are *The Fiddler in Barly* and *The Woodcutter's House*. They were not published strictly in sequence, but they form a cycle, and I find it convenient to comment on them here in a group because the treatment of background and characters in these books is so typical. No one who read *Peter Kindred* could fail to observe the poetic intensity of those early pages which describe the country around Exeter, New Hampshire. I feel sure that the author had this region in mind when he wrote *Autumn* and its sequels. Where but in New Hampshire can people be found who say, "I don't aim to", "You're too easy satisfied", "This is the best cooked beans I ever eat", "It's a grief to me", and "My Uncle Henry is a power with vegetables"? And where else do people develop the curious taste for eating sugar on their lettuce? Yet, although the soil of New Hampshire clings to these books, the scene is as much a figment of the author's imagination as T. F. Powys's Dodder.

And the characters . . . But let Mr. Nathan speak for himself regarding his choice of materials.

Give me no more than homely words
And kindly thoughts to build my house;
No more than what is given birds
Or less than might be loaned a mouse.

In revolt against largeness and modernity and dust and confusion, Mr. Nathan has developed a fondness for the diminutive and the sequestered. There are no Napoleons and no Tono Bungays to be found in his pages. If any sort of tremendousness gets upon the scene, it is speedily punctured and deflated. An obscure country schoolmaster, who is presently elbowed into yet greater obscurity by a pushing young female pedagogue; a tramp with a fiddle and a performing dog; an orphan child who dances in the sun till the soles of her shoes, carelessly repaired by her shiftless father, come unglued.

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It was her being happy that vexed them.

"It's not", said Mrs. Watson, "that I grudge her an egg now and then to keep the life in her body. But you'd think she'd take it modestly, instead of dancing around like she owned it."

Mrs. Sebold sighed.

"What's an egg, Josephine?" she asked mildly.

The storekeeper at Hillsboro, not unnaturally, saw his neighbours

in the form of fruits, vegetables, stick pins, and pieces of calico. Of Mr. Jeminry he used to say: "Sweet apples, but small, very small, small and sweet."

"Yes," said Farmer Barly, "but tell me, who wants small apples?"

Mr. Frye nodded his head. "Ah, that's it," he agreed.

Mr. Jeminry was the village schoolmaster, to whom I have earlier alluded.

Farmer Barly had left Mr. Frye at the store and encountered a Mr. Crabbe:

Mr. Crabbe spat into the stubble. "The way I look at it," he said, "it's like this: first there's me; and then there's you. That's the way I look at it, Mr. B." And he went home to repeat to his wife what he had said to Farmer Barly. "I gave it to him," he declared.

Some minnows were fighting in a pool:—

One, larger than the rest, found a piece of bread which had fallen into the water. "This is my bread," he said, and gazed angrily at his friends, who were trying to bite him, "I deserve this bread," he added.

A boy and a girl were out riding:—

"Aren't you going to kiss me, Tom?"

He slapped the reins bitterly across the horse's back. "What's the good of that?" he asked in turn.

A little girl set up a pin store:—

"Would you like some nice licorice?" she asked. "Everything's very dear."

Reading one of Mr. Nathan's books is like looking into an ant hill. Everything is so small, but the smaller objects make just as good sense as the large. And all are so occupied with their own affairs and display so complete a fidelity to the laws of their own nature that, conscious as we are that many of them are disagreeable, we are bound to unite with the author in a feeling of wonder and awe and exhilaration at the sheer diversity of the spectacle of creation.

Of all Mr. Nathan's books I believe *Jonah* is the best. It was selling for thirty-nine cents when I last inquired; it is one of those very rare books which are cheap at their original price, so that, now it is being remaindered, it is a very unusual bargain. In his treatment of the love story in *Jonah* Mr. Nathan has allowed himself more emotion than he commonly does, and I cannot feel this is a fault. But regarded merely as an ironic and humorous work the book's value is very high. Listen to the High Priest, for example: "Let us all be right—or at least as many of us as possible". And, again, in clenching an argument: "Is it likely that God in his infinite wisdom should see this any less clearly than I do?" Or consider this argument in support of monotheism, which may well have been lifted bodily from some quaint discourse on the subject: "Moreover, there is a regularity about the seasons that would be impossible in the case of a number of Gods"!

Here is Deborah, Jonah's mother: "Always trouble; never what would be sensible. . . . You would think there was nothing but fighting in the world. . . ." And elsewhere, advising her son: "Always do your best. However, do not tire yourself out. And in case of robbers, or a lion, please come home; and do not make a fool of yourself". Was ever maternal wisdom and folly more judiciously intermingled?

Jonah has no money and he isn't a practical man. So why should a girl wait for

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him when a rich foreign nobleman stands ready to lay the world at her feet? "What would people think of you if you were to marry for nothing? You would be ruined socially." With this leaven of worldly wisdom planted in her mind, Miriam is presently convinced that the prophet has insulted her in offering her his love. So she pitches him out neck and crop. And Jonah goes home to his mother. "Can he buy love with money?" he asks, speaking of his rival.

> Deborah thought to herself, "Yes, love, too"; *but she did not say so.* Putting aside her bowl, she asked gently, "Do you love her so much?" [Italics mine.]

III

The curious thing about Mr. Robert Nathan is that, though he is intellectually hard and muscular, like Deborah he is emotionally tender. One wonders if this may not have something to do with his difficulty in finding an audience. It is possible that reviewers, who almost invariably mention his subtlety, his satire, his sophistication, his intelligence, have failed to convey to the public any impression of his emotional freshness. Satirists are supposed to be savage. Mr. Nathan is not savage. Sophisticated people are understood to be hard-boiled; intelligent people are apt to be disillusioned. Mr. Nathan is neither hard-boiled nor disillusioned. Nor is his work marred by arid cleverness, as one might infer from hearing it called delicate and subtle. And no author has ever achieved a more limpid style or more thoroughly removed every obstacle and obscurity from his reader's path.

I have earlier alluded to two one-act plays which Robert Nathan wrote and published in his undergraduate days and which, probably to his sorrow, may still be read in the pages of the *Harvard Monthly*. These are *Atoms* and *The Coward*. It must be confessed that in reading these youthful fables one is chiefly impressed with the crudity of literary methods and the lack of observation. *Atoms* was conceived as the tragedy of a spurious superman. The hero regards himself as superior to prejudice, till he learns that the girl he has been intending to marry was formerly the mistress of the detestable Caspard Grey; in fear of the latter's ridicule he breaks off the match. *The Coward* further explores the potentialities of masculine pusillanimity. Here the scene is the Latin Quarter in Paris. A young woman art student has fallen in love with a cowardly trifler. When she goes blind, he feigns drunkenness so that she will break off their engagement.

Atoms and *The Coward* are what is called immature, but they are very creditable to their author's feelings. The remarkable thing is that his feelings have not changed. *Atoms* and *The Coward* betray the fastidiousness of a youth who regards a kiss as a consecration—he felt even then that it mattered more than a marriage ceremony—a fastidiousness that has proved ineradicable in the poet and idealist that Mr. Nathan has continued to be. This fact is of basic importance. As a writer of sophistication, as a man who has exposed his mind to the world of cold actualities, Mr. Nathan might have been expected to lose some of that delicate freshness, that pristine innocence, that quivering susceptibility. He has lost none of it.

"One must have faith," Professor Pembauer remarks to himself in *The Orchid*, "if one is to be an artist." And Mr. Nathan adds, "But he did not know how to say what he meant by faith". The history of Robert Nathan as a writer may be found in his increasing grasp of his faith and in his increasing delicacy and power in expressing

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it. I have earlier remarked that since *Peter Kindred* Mr. Nathan has seldom written in sorrow and anger. His emotional control is not absolute but discriminatory. He regards some emotions as raw and uncivilized and destructive. If the world is bad, there is no use inveighing against it; one must try to imagine a better. Towards the whole promotion and selling ballyhoo his attitude is no longer one of attack; it is one of withdrawal; it is marked by an elegant aloofness. Poetic love between man and woman seems to him to have been banished from the occidental world practically since the "fall of man", but at least in imagination he can partially repossess the lost paradise. And what has more power than a dream?

I do not need to travel [remarks Naaman in *Jonah*]; here in this quiet garden the sun sets and the moon rises; the breeze of evening whispers through the leaves of my acacia tree, and I see through the branches the stars, which have not changed; I hear the voices of cicada, shrill and sad, *as when I was a boy,* I heard the herds winding down from the hills. All is as it was and as it will be; and my heart overflows with love and peace. [Italics mine.]

As when I was a boy! Except ye repent and continue as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the heaven of Mr. Nathan's imagination. Not childlike in the crudity of your methods or the clumsiness of your proceedings, but staunch in the affirmation of your own basic necessities even while you develop in the scope of your understanding and sympathy toward others. The development of this understanding and sympathy is the thing that Nathan most consciously advocates. In *The Woodcutter's House* he has introduced the first of his several supernatural creatures, the little green god of good humour who, driven from the habitations of man, has become a dweller in the forest. Good humour is the quality in which Jonah is found wanting in the passage in which Jehovah takes leave of the minor prophet before turning his eyes towards Greece. Good humour is the quality whose absence makes a Presbyterian heaven so bleak for a converted Jew in *There Is Another Heaven.* Only here the quality idealized is something more than good humour; it is love, the natural warmth of human affection, irrespective of difference of customs or habits of thought.

IV

In Robert Nathan, as in the Book of Job and in William Blake's poetry, everything has its natural voice. The whole universe is alive with poetic qualities, with engaging meanings, beside which the whole question of praise or of blame or even of consistency sinks into insignificance. Amusement, appreciation, reverence, exaltation—all these are appropriate and irreconcilable responses to the stimulus that is offered. When I attribute faith to Nathan I merely mean that he seems to me healthy and natural as far as one can be in a world so imperfectly evolved. Some sort of faith is implied in the will to live. Mere good health is a generator of some sort of faith. And a tincture of faith, if not of credulity, is wrought into the fabric of Nathan's brilliant creations as it was in the naïve and humorous and living tapestries that were woven in the middle ages. The beetle in Jonah is one of the bright ornaments that remind one of such a tapestry.

At her feet a beetle with a bright green coat which reflected the light was walking soberly towards his house. Presently an ant approached and gave him a bite on the leg. The beetle turned an anxious look on his tiny adversary, whose head barely came up to his knee. "Come, come," he exclaimed, "have you no respect for beauty? Do you think God enjoys having you

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bite me? He would be very much upset if anything happened to me."

Disdaining to reply, the ant went away to find his friends and discuss the situation. "I gave it to him," he said; "I gave him a bite he won't forget in a hurry. Now he knows who I am."

There is something almost godlike in the mingling of warmth and of humorous detachment in such passages as this one. It is difficult to say which argument is the more foolish or which is the more appealing.

It is odd to conclude an article on an author whose intellect is apparent in every line that has come from his pen by remarking that, given his other endowments and acquisitions, his determining quality is his affection for life. Nathan's humour is certain to be profusely commented on. But what of his tenderness, the quality that enables him, like Blake, and the author of Job or Ecclesiastes, to be almost as much exercised about a snake and an eagle, Behemoth and a cony, about the little dog Musket, who decides with advancing years that "life is not all what-you-may-call-it", as he is about a bishop or a high priest or an archangel. Let me quote a few more lines of verse as an illustration of the psychic relativism which permits him to feel so much zest for diminutive objects.

Now does the spider's house
  Hang gray upon a wall,
The carcass of a louse
  Adorns it most of all.

On dry stalks of clover,
  Or under sunny stones,
October will uncover
  The fly's white bones.

This kind of writing is Nathan's favourite pastime. It was also Blake's. I have made a comparison, too, with Ecclesiastes, not alone for the atmosphere of pure poetry that it suggests, but also because Nathan has in common with the writer of Ecclesiastes a skepticism about most worldly success and about every species of deferred compensation. Yet like William Blake, who in addition to a positive intellect had the temperament of a believer, Mr. Nathan is conscious that when a young man rejoices in his youth and in the wife of his bosom, or seizes with avidity on whatever good thing is left to him in a world that imposes hardships upon a fastidious taste, he may also be able to see

. . . a World in a grain of sand,
And a Heaven in a wild flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand,
And Eternity in an hour.

In short he is like an angel in a cloud in one of Blake's own designs. Intellectual detachment enables him to see human error as something remote and absurd, not peculiar to our day but the same in all ages. But he sees it still. The vapours ascend to him. He transmutes them to humour and pathos in works of exquisite pattern, which entertain and divert and stimulate our minds and refresh our appetite for beauty. They are almost too easy to read, which is a pity, because those who associate depth with obscurity may perhaps turn from Nathan without having realized that, no less than the works of the realists, they are profound in their implications and closely related to life.

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THE CULT OF CULTURE

by Winthrop Parkhurst

As EVERY cultivated person knows, the foremost Russian poet is Púshkin, a proton is the nucleus of an atom, Dr. Johnson had scrofula and wrote a dictionary, Henry VIII had six wives and slew two of them, vitamin D is especially valuable in preventing rickets, Plato was a famous Greek philosopher, pyorrhea is when your gums bleed and your teeth fall out, the value of π is 3.1416, the first line of *The Star Spangled Banner* is "Oh, say, can you see", and the scientific name for germ is bacillus.

As many cultivated persons know, the foremost Russian poet is Alexander Púshkin who was born in 1799, the two wives whom Henry VIII slew were Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard, the value of π is 3.14159+, the second line of *The Star Spangled Banner* is "What so proudly we hailed by the twilight's last gleaming?", and the scientific name for dentistry is odontology.

As a few cultivated persons know, the foremost Russian poet is Alexander Sergeievitch Púshkin (pronounced *Poosh-kin*), who was born in 1799 and killed in a duel in 1837, the value of π is 3.1415926+, the third line of *The Star Spangled Banner* is "Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight", and the scientific name for fishing is halieutics.

As a very few cultivated persons know, the fourth line of the *Star Spangled Banner* is "O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?" and the value of π is 3.1415926535+.

As a microscopic number of cultivated persons know, the value of π is 3.14159265358979 3+.

No; this is not an attempt to be funny. The foregoing paragraphs are not set down in a spirit of raillery. The fact to which they bear witness is scarcely humourous. For it is saddening—genuinely saddening—to realize, as unbiased reflection makes us realize, how scattered and fragmentary is our knowledge, how few things the conscious mind keeps on its finger-tips, how paltry is our boasted store of bottled wisdom. We pride ourselves upon being generally familiar with world history, conversant with the creative achievements of our species, acquainted with the facts and theories of physical science. By virtue of having once absorbed such knowledge, we preen ourselves on being educated men and women; and by virtue of having digested this knowledge, we parade as cultured men and women. And yet, when we come down to cases, how much do we really know at any instant? How much of our knowledge is available knowledge? How much of our vaunted cultivation is a mere saliva-moistened thumb which surreptitiously ploughs the pages of reference books?

Oh, say, can you see by the dawn's early light
What so proudly we hail by the tra-la-la boom-
boom?"

To be or not to be: That is the question:
Whether 'tis better to boop-boop-be-doop
Or to rum-tum-tum tiddle.

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Such characteristic breakdowns are the reverse of funny; they are mournfully symbolic refrains, inadvertently devastating confessions of the appalling gaps in the stanzas of our sure knowledge.

Deep down in the inaccessible cellar of the subconscious, so the psychologists assure us, is stored away every experience life has brought us. And that assurance is certainly a very comfortable one. It strokes the forlorn spine of a disconsolate ego. Upstairs we may not know beans, or the scientific name for beans, or the difference between a lemur and a femur. But downstairs? Ah, downstairs what *don't* we just know about anything! For example: "The lima bean (*Phaseolus lunatus*), a variety of the Sieva or civet plant, is an edible legume native to Brazil (area, 3,275,510 square miles). Having been found in a number of ancient Peruvian tombs, it was doubtless once a favoured dish of the Inca chieftains. Among these was Atahuallpa who, as we all know, was slain by the Spanish invader Francisco Pizarro (1470-1541) who received his own just deserts at the murderous hands of the adherents of Almagro". Just like that! Or try us on some *recherché* aesthetic matter: "Alessandro Botticelli (properly Filipepi), a noted member of the Florentine School, born *circa* 1447, was a pupil of Fra Filippo Lippi (1406-1469) and one of the earliest Italian painters to portray the adult nude. He was commissioned by Pope Sixtus IV (whose pontificate, as all will recall, extended from 1471 to 1484) to execute several works for the Vatican chapel. His *Allegory of Spring* (*Primavera*) is perhaps the most popular of his paintings, all of which instantly leap into the imaginative eye of cultured persons". Or: "The sine of one second of an arc, if we may be pardoned for repeating so hoary a truism, is 0.000004848137".

Ah, yes; the subconscious mind has laid down for itself a most excellent cellar. We easily could forgive it for strutting a little as it surveys its stock of names, dates, mathematical formulae, philosophical principles, historical tendencies, and eternal verities. It never once forgets, it never falters. What it knows once it knows forever. But its poverty-stricken neighbour upstairs, sedulously licking a thumb and thumbing pages—what can we say for this attic neighbor? What can we hand it but pity?

II

Now it may be said that knowing the value of "pi" to fifteen decimals, like knowing the middle name of the eleventh president of the United States, is entirely useless. It may be said that the mere knowledge of many facts is not culture. Indeed, one of the hall-marks of the truly cultivated person is benign contempt for that person who, in the stock euphemism for virtual ignorance, "knows everything". The guest at the dinner party who is ready to tell you, without so much as a glance at his cuff, how many calories raised the soup to its present temperature and how many kings belonged to the English House of Stuart; the railway companion who knows the exact length of a rail and pours into your ear, as he cocks his own to the click the wheels make, the varying velocity at which you are proceeding; the lean-lipped statistical wizard who knows the average number of cells in the human brain, the average number of times a whale spouts annually, and the cube root of the product of those average numbers; the encyclopaedia on legs who knows that Meyerbeer's real name was Beer, that rarebit is a corruption of rabbit (rabbits in Wales being rarities), that umbrellas were used by the Egyptians, and that Jesus Christ was

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born in 5 B.C. owing to a miscalculation on the part of Dionysius Exiguus which has been incorporated in all later reckonings: these omniscient pests who turn on facts as if they were operating a fire-hose cause cultivated men and women to utter little shrieks of polite horror. We shudder, when we do not yawn, in their presence. Uncomfortable in our own ignorance, which is simply greater, we cover our embarrassment by consigning our informers to some polite purgatory. Of mere facts, we languidly and confidently murmur to ourselves, true culture can never be compounded.

And doubtless we are right in that opinion. Nevertheless, by that same opinion are we confounded. For, while we do not demand that our associates be able to recite the Carolingian kings backward, we impose cultural requirements quite as silly. Around these requirements a cult has risen; and I, for one, would not relish sewing on the buttons that will burst from the garments of a future century when the laughable passwords of our clique have become history.

Let me be concrete and take Púshkin.

As a cultivated person you have heard of Púshkin. You have heard references and seen references to Púshkin. Probably you yourself, at one time or another, have mentioned Púshkin. Barring only Tolstoy and Gorki, Púshkin is the writer you are most likely to mention in any reference whatever to Russian literature. So you mention Púshkin. Why not? Is not Púshkin the foremost Russian poet? Of course. In all cultivated circles he is so recognized. He has a tang, a *je-ne-sais-quoi cachet*, which is indisputable. His fame has encircled a whole planet. Therefore, as I may have said, you mention Púshkin, taking care to give a juicy, rich *oosh* sound to the first syllable. Immediately the eye of your hearer brightens visibly. "Ah," he exclaims, honouring fame that has girt a planet with another *oosh* sound, "Púshkin!" Your eyes meet in mutual understanding. You say no more. You have no need to say more than those magic syllables. And this is peculiarly fortunate for both of you, since exactly what might happen next, supposing you were compelled to stop pushkinning each other, is something that belongs exclusively to the world of nightmares.

Not long since, the writer had an experience of this order, or nearly had it. For some reason or other, in the mysterious way such things happen, he mentioned Púshkin. He mentioned Púshkin easily, casually, with that air of mingled familiarity and reverence which marks the discourse of cultured persons on such occasions. The *oosh* fairly oozed cultivation; nothing could have beaten it for pure ooshiness. Indeed, for one perilous moment, it threatened to swallow up the writer like a bed of quicksand; it was nip and tuck between honesty and humbug. And then, in the mysterious way a shaft of light will abruptly cleave a stretch of darkness, the speaker, I am proud to relate, leaped out of the bog that was closing over him, contemptuously crushed it between thumb and forefinger, and in a trice had its arms pinioned behind it. Púshkin! Well, who really and actually *was* Púshkin? Did I know when he was born? No. Did I know his first name? No. Was I familiar with a single one of his poems? No. Could I quote a single line from any one of his poems, even in an inadequate translation? No. What, then, did I know about Púshkin? Simply this: that his name was Púshkin (pronounced Pooshkin). And why, knowing absolutely nothing about the man or his works, did I mention him? And why, finally, had I long felt secret scorn for those who looked at you inquiringly when you said Púshkin, as

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if they half imagined you were talking about a South American fruit or an Egyptian vegetable? Neither answer, when examined, was flattering. I mentioned Púshkin, and listened to other people mentioning Púshkin, because we all had once heard he was a famous poet. We knew nothing beyond the name and the reputation, but still we mentioned him with a knowing air because he was a word, one of those multitudinous words which, plucked more or less at random from the grab-bag history, became incorporated in our cultural background and symbolic of it. In brief, we had pushkinned ourselves into an attitude.

For—as I have suggested—this famous if utterly unknown Russian poet is a symbol of much more than a Russian poet, or indeed of any Russian or any poet. He stands for refined humbug the world over; the sort of humbug we all practise daily; the snobbery of this writer and his reader. I pushkin, you pushkin, we pushkin. Whatever may be said against such a neologism, a great deal of what we say is pure pushkinning, a good deal of what we write is pushkinnery, and I am very much afraid that a little of what we think is plain pushkinism.

Consider. Consider, for example, the way we secretly shudder over various trifling *gaucheries* of our fellow-citizens. In most cases these *gaucheries* are very small ones. The crudity which makes our souls wince and consigns the offender to uncultured regions may be nothing more than a single misspelled word, a single mispronounced word, a single lapse in syntax, a single blunder regarding a date or a personage which happens to be our favourite date or our favourite personage; no matter: the offender goes silently on our blacklist. Let him spell thousands of other words with dazzling accuracy; let him pronounce thousands of other words with blinding elegance (even a few, perhaps, about which we ourselves feel uncertain); no matter: out comes our *Index Expurgatorius* and down goes the sinner on its pages. For the canons of our cultural clique have been outraged, and its pet aversions are not to be trifled with.

Take, if you must be concrete, the word *irreparable*. Here we have a single word of eleven letters and five syllables—one little word taken from the fifteen or twenty thousand words of an average vocabulary. One would not say that especially grave importance could be attached to it in the mind of any moderately reasonable and intelligent human being. As long as its meaning is conveyed, any pronunciation of the word would seem adequate even though one particular pronunciation, simply as a matter of custom, might be favoured.

To argue thus, however, is to project yourself instantly beyond the pale of culture. For *irreparable* is no mere word: it is a symbol of profound social significance. Let a man place the accent on the second syllable, and you would ask him to dinner or let him hold your wallet without anxiety. Let him but shift the accent to the third syllable, however, and at once you take a secret oath that he shall aspire in vain for the hand of your daughter. Instantly you regard him with grave suspicion—nay, not with suspicion but with horrid certainty. You know, beyond any peradventure, that he is a vulgarian. True, he may possess sterling virtues; he may be as industrious as Sisyphus and as good as the day is long with daylight saving time; you might even go so far as to vote for him in a political crisis, especially if his rival candidate gives the word no accent at all, being ignorant of it. No matter. In the single fell act of shifting the accent to the third syllable he has committed

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a blunder which is irreparable. He has profaned a veritable touchstone of culture. Nothing can reinstate him in your estimation. Harsh though your judgement may seem to you in calm moments, the man's entire outlook on life, and no mere fraction of his vocabulary, crumbles. He has wiped his mouth on his sleeve, by verbal proxy, and blown his nose without benefit of a handkerchief.

III

I do not profess to understand these strange matters; they puzzle me. Why should mispronouncing the adjective *irreparable* be a scandal in our eyes, seeing that mispronouncing the verb *combat* is almost, among the most fastidious of our flock, universal? Why do we laugh at the illiterate spelling *recieve* but fail to crack a smile at the illiterate spelling *dessicate?* Why is it vitally important for us to know that Henry VIII had six wives and murdered two of them when Henry VII, for all we know or care, may have died either a bachelor or a bigamist?

These matters, I say, are dark matters; no satisfactory explanation of them has yet been vouchsafed a puzzled planet. There is simply no accounting for our erratic conduct in selecting certain items as indispensable parts of the cultural equipment of a human being and in discarding other comparable items as irrelevant to it. The nearest thing to a partial explanation is that we are completely moonstruck.

But whether we seriously weigh various explanations or impotently waive them all, we hardly can wiggle out of the fact that we have made a cult of the vague commodity we call our culture. That fact stares us straight in the face even after (so to speak) we have turned our backs on it. Our background—the usable portions of it—is a foreground of haphazard data, hand-me-down dates, and pick-me-up allusions to art and science. Púshkins and protons, first lines of national anthems, an English king here, a Greek philosopher there, the correct emphasis of a certain syllable elsewhere: of such is the kingdom of our well-bred heaven. In it we take refuge when the appalling penury of our conscious minds overwhelms us, and from it we look down, thus helping ourselves to a greater altitude, upon those uncultivated contemporaries who have failed to memorize the open sesames of our fraternity.

You may say that this is a cult of the trivial; that essential culture does not concern itself with such jejuneries; that your man of breeding and of education is governed, in the choice of his associates and in the general conduct of his life, by broader and deeper and grander principles. Well, there is no initial charge for saying such things, but the upkeep is disastrously heavy. Instinctively and incessantly we pass judgments based entirely on such jejuneries. Misspelling or mispronouncing a single word may seem to be a ridiculously small and purely literary defection. It is sufficient, nevertheless, to ostracize the offender and make us regard him, instantaneously, as a pariah. Do not take my word for it, or any one's word for it; simply examine your own spiritual and mental scruples, your own particular pet prejudices and private nauseas. Notice for yourself how your whole soul curls up around the edges, how your entire attitude toward an acquaintance curdles, when some one whom you have just met, and toward whom you have felt warmly amiable, says, without a wink or a blush, irrep*a*rable. If you are candid, you will have to admit that those broad, deep, grand prin-

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ciples have suddenly exploded. Abruptly, before your very eyes, they become as irrelevant as Christian charity when a dinner guest takes a drink from his finger-bowl.

From all this one might draw the conclusion, I suppose, that our cultural laws are simply points of etiquette. Knowing of the existence of Púshkin is equivalent to taking off your hat in a lady's presence. Obviously, you do not hurt the lady by remaining covered, and baring the head is hence an arbitrary and petty practice. On the other hand, trifling though the act is, it has come to represent a thousand acts and attitudes of a gentleman; its omission is thus an assault on the social structure, revealing a thousand flaws in the breeding of the offender. In exactly the same way, it might be argued, a single small infraction of the cultural code betokens large deep-seated areas of mental crudity. In other words, it is vitally important to know of the existence of Púshkin, if you wish to pass as a cultivated person, because, if you do not know of the existence of Púshkin, it may safely be assumed that your ignorance spreads out in all directions and actually takes in—God save the mark!—protons, the value of "pi" to four decimals, and the number of Henry VIII's wives.

IV

According to Sir Thomas Browne, man is a noble animal, splendid in ashes and pompous in the grave. How ludicrous an animal he is on the hither side of the crematory is a question that might be raised, after viewing his cultural gesticulations, by some Doubting Thomas.

The defects of his conscious memory, in which some of those gesticulations are grounded, are only pathetic. You cannot poke fun at a creature who, only with heroic effort, is able to remember the third line of his national anthem; you pity him, you condole with him, you cannot blame him. Your heart goes out to a creature who spends six years of his childhood memorizing the multiplication table up to the miserable square of 12, four years of his youth memorizing the half-hundred historic turning-points of the past millennium, and four years of his early manhood memorizing the four-and-forty facts and theories which a college sells him. No, for these native shortcomings you cannot blame him. If man is a noble animal he is also a pitiful. His conscious mind is a sieve; nine hundred and ninety-nine thousandths of everything passing into it passes through it, straight down into the subconscious cellar. What remains upstairs for actual use is a random date or two, a smeared recollection of heavy fogs in the shipping office, and a pair of thumbs "with dew all bedecked and wistful longing".

But if man is noble and pitiful he is also ludicrous. He is pompous out of the grave as well as inside it. And nowhere is he more ludicrously pompous than in those circles where his culture takes an airing; where, fearful of being thought an ass, he becomes a donkey; where, day after day, he pushkins his way through a throng of people who are bound together in the unvoiced conspiracy of all good pushkinites.

Ridentem dicere verum (one asks after thumbing a dictionary) *quid vetat?*

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BULL-FIGHTS AND POLITICS

THERE will be many readers and reviewers to say, truly enough, that in DEATH IN THE AFTERNOON (*Scribner's.* $3.50) Hemingway has written the best book on bull-fighting; but few, I fear, to say that he has written the best book on the best of all sports and spectacles. There is a curious distortion of values in most of the non-Spanish world which insists that bull-fighting is cruel, barbaric, and degrading, whereas prize-fighting and football are noble and manly arts. It should be obvious that a sport which calls upon an almost incredible combination of rare and admirable qualities, for use against an animal, not against one's fellow men, is on a far higher human plane than sports which utilize much more ordinary qualities to injure and incapacitate other men. In this latter respect, of course, prize-fighting is far worse than football, but college football is seldom free from deliberate attempts to hurt players of the other team, particularly the stars. When this element is not present, football can well be considered one of the best of sports; but by whatever tests can reasonably be applied, it seems to me, bull-fighting will be found to excel almost immeasurably.

Good football has its great moments; but in a fairly long experience of football and a very brief one of bull-fighting, I have only on rare occasions witnessed in football games episodes that could be compared in skill and courage with what one sees in all but the worst of bull-fights, and frequently sees time after time in a single afternoon. There was a moment in Albie Booth's first game against the Army when his run-back of a punt reminded me of the elation roused a score of times by Joselito, the greatest of the modern matadors, and by several others. Booth stood facing the oncoming Army ends, with his eyes on the ball but apparently unaware that it was obviously destined to land several yards behind him; he seemed to be miscalculating. Suddenly, with the ends almost upon him, he turned and ran toward his own goal posts, caught the ball over his shoulder like an outfielder nabbing a well clouted baseball, circled even nearer to his goal-line, then turned and shot up the field, eluded three-quarters of the Army team, and was finally forced out of bounds well past the middle of the field. It was a miracle of agility and daring. Furthermore, it was a miracle he could repeat: later in the game he executed the same manoeuvre, for a gain almost as great. Such moments, however rare, make football a fine game. But as I say, such moments are everyday occurrences in bull-fighting; with the added element, among many others, that the penalty for failure in bull-fighting is not merely lost yardage or a hard fall, but death.

But this is not the place to sing the praises of bull-fighting. Nor does anyone now need to: Hemingway has done it superbly in *Death in the Afternoon.* I merely wanted to take the opportunity to pay tribute to Hemingway's subject as well as to his masterly treatment of a most complicated and subtle form of spectacle. I know comparatively little

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of the finer points of bull-fighting, but I am sure that even those much better versed will have a great wealth of details illuminated for them by the book. Hemingway has gone past the spectator's viewpoint and made his way to the viewpoint of the torero himself—a feat which surely cannot be achieved by a non-Spaniard more than once in a generation, and which has never before been coupled, in English at least, with such skill in writing.

Hemingway is somewhat on the defensive, as any Anglo-Saxon must be, about the charge of cruelty to animals, especially to the horses. But it seems to me he delivers an effective onslaught on the "animalarians", as he calls them. I have never seen sense in the view that there is something inhuman in giving a fighting animal a short, almost painless fight, which in the end he happens to lose, and in giving a few decrepit nags half a minute of pain which would surely be exceeded by only a few weeks of the rough treatment they would need in order to be made to earn their oats—few horses die in pasture!—but that there is something noble in setting two abnormally powerful men to pounding each other to pulp. But such is the prevailing attitude, and I fear that even Hemingway's book will do little to change it. It can, however, give pleasure to a large number who appreciate good writing and a wealth of good anecdotes; meanwhile giving secret delight to the small company of trans-Pyreneean *aficionados*.

The very factor which gives the chief excellence to *Death in the Afternoon,* Hemingway's acquisition of the bull-fighter's viewpoint, may perhaps also account for what seems to me the main omission of the book: namely, insufficient emphasis on what I can only call the histrionic aspect of the sport. He uses often such words as "emotion", "grace", "style", "elegance" in describing good work, but with these words he is only barely touching one of the most conspicuous of the many ways in which bull-fighting is unique among sports: the extremely close relation between the performers and the spectators. It is not only tradition that would make it incongruous for a football player after a beautiful run or tackle to stand up and acknowledge the cheering with a bow: it would be incongruous, for one thing, because he had just landed in a heap, probably badly jolted; but chiefly because he is forced by the conditions of the game to be practically oblivious to the spectators, to concentrate on his team-mates and opponents. A bull-fighter, on the other hand, is not only an athlete, a man of courage, a quick thinker: he is always an actor. In a bull-fighting pass or series of passes, the action is not complete until it has turned from the bull to the gallery: the "ole's" of the fans are not merely rejoicings, but an integral part of the performance, which the torero works for, hears, responds to. He is as closely in touch with his audience as a jazz-singer on a theatrical runway. Unless a fighter can combine this ability to play on the emotions of his witnesses, to electrify them with sheer histrionics at the same time that he thrills them by his courage and skill, he is lacking in one of the main requirements. Bull-fighting is the only sport I cannot imagine being performed without spectators. I do not mean to imply that Hemingway fails to appreciate this factor—he obviously does, notably in his discussion of Solozarno, a technically perfect bull-fighter who yet is "completely without personality", and hence unsatisfactory. I merely suggest that speaking of absence of personality or presence of style, emotion and so on, imperfectly conveys one of the distinctive elements of the sport.

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Death in the Afternoon does not carry Hemingway beyond his earlier books as an artist, but that is hardly to be expected of an interlude of reporting and miscellaneous comment in a career chiefly devoted to fiction. But if he nowhere excels himself, there is plenty of writing as fine as he has ever done. I think particularly of the marvellously well sustained pages devoted to a tenderly ironic survey of bull-fighting through the last hundred and fifty years, showing that always the Golden Age is said to have ended with so-and-so, that always the bulls of nowadays are much smaller and younger than those of yore, that always we are in a decadent era, and, finally, that always it is only the death of a great fighter that makes the critics realize that he, too, was of the great line, that he, too, created a Golden Age, whereas now we are entering a period of decadence, of smaller and younger bulls, and so on and so on. Amusingly enough, much of Hemingway's own book is a complaint of the same kind: the Golden Age ended with the death of Joselito and the retirement of Belmonte; the new men are mostly flashes in the pan and all on a minor scale; "the bull-fight is being killed by unscrupulous bull breeders who sell under-aged, under-weight, and underbred bulls", besides breeding them for smaller and smaller horns; and all the rest of the harking back to the great days of Fulano de Tal. Still, Hemingway convinces me: I should think it extremely unlikely that Joselito or Belmonte could be immediately succeeded by anything like their equals; and it is only to be expected that Big Business methods and republican politics are beginning to do in Spain what they have done everywhere else to all the traditional and ceremonial and most deeply human things.

Perhaps readers should be warned that *Death in the Afternoon* is far better than the earlier pages would suggest: self-consciousness at his rather exotic theme seems to have numbed the author into his besetting sin of Gertrude Steinese, jumbled sentence-structure and punctuation, and phoney philosophizing. These diminish as the book progresses. But other blemishes are strewn along the way, notably a constant sentimentalizing of death, as in the book's title (perhaps a non-combatant reviewer should point out that sentimentalizing was not the only attitude toward death good soldiers brought out of the war, even though it is literarily the modish one); and a constant adolescent coarseness. The extreme coarseness of language is indeed an amazing sidelight on publishing conditions today, that a popular author should be able to insist on such disregard of the proprieties usually associated with the general distribution of books through the trade. But more serious is this evidence that Hemingway is still far from outgrowing his truculent he-manishness and attaining anything like the maturity, depth, and breadth suited to his great natural gifts.

The book includes a large number of excellent bull-fight photographs, an elaborate glossary of terms, and some case-reports of typical reactions by non-Spaniards to their first *corridas de toro*. The manufacturing was extremely well done—the price seems almost ridiculously low for so handsome a volume of five hundred large pages.

IT WAS an inspiration that prompted the publication in book form of H. L. Mencken's newspaper reports of the two national political conventions (MAKING A PRESIDENT. *Knopf*. $1.50). I would not, myself, be without the *Baltimore Evening Sun* on Monday, the day of Mencken's weekly article, and daily during conventions and

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such other occasions, like the Scopes trial, when he resumes his place with the legmen of journalism. Too little of his work of this kind is published in books—and too much of the other kind, when he steps outside the fields suited to his powers and limitations and writes of literary, philosophical, theological, or scientific subjects on which he can only make a sad spectacle of himself. He is at his best when he restricts himself to such elementary subjects of satire as American politics, Communism (Communism is the only kind of foreign politics he can handle, and here he is sometimes naïve), quackish literary cults, prohibition, or the sects growing out of Puritanism. And he is at his best when engaged in straight reporting of the many kinds of spectacles that come within his range of sensitiveness. I remember an old piece in the New York *Evening Mail* during the war, never reprinted, which described a hotel in Atlantic City. Nothing more—merely an account of its architecture and appointments—but it was worth any number of the unhappy attempts at serious intellectual criticism that lie embalmed in his books.

A political convention provides Mencken with three of his best subjects: a spectacle to report, national politics and prohibition to satirize. This happy concurrence makes *Making a President* a delight for all who enjoy such things—as well as a handy *vade mecum* for those undecided how to vote next month. The reporting element predominates, of course, in these dispatches written during the proceedings and telegraphed in sections to his paper. In an interesting preface Mencken describes the conditions under which newspapermen at a convention perform their tasks. Worse conditions could hardly be imagined; but we all know how well the conventions are usually covered, and Mencken, at least, is not prevented by them from doing some of his best writing. He speaks in the preface of noticing a "tired air" in his description of the famous all-night session of the Democrats, which was composed in especially harassing circumstances. But I had no such feeling on reading the piece in the *Evening Sun*, and a second reading in the book still leaves it a superb reportorial job.

The running comment of satire is in Mencken's quiet vein of private amusement. There is no indignation, nor even that steady, controlled, ironical denunciation in which he usually manages to wrap his indignations before putting them into writing. This paragraph might serve as a sample of the predominant tone:

> The Maryland delegation is following a cautious programme. It is hard at work operating on the anti-Roosevelt delegates and at the same time trying to avoid outraging the Roosevelt men. The business of tackling the Southerners has been largely in the hands of Dr. Hugh H. Young, who speaks the Confederate dialect fluently and has been a lifelong admirer of the late Gen. Robert E. Lee. Dr. Young put in most of the morning with the Alabama delegation, and he is now working his way across the Cotton Belt to North Carolina.

The book includes two excellent interviews, one with Bishop Cannon and one with Patrick Callahan of Kentucky, an Irish Catholic prohibitionist. Mencken would not of course use an interview as an occasion for denunciation or unrestrained satire; he would not indeed approach anyone for whom he did not feel too much respect to treat him as he does those who incur his unmitigated scorn. He is usually respectful toward able Catholics, and it is well known that he has come to admire Bishop Cannon. Both interviews with men whose opinions he despises are models of conscientious report-

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ing and of satire so delicately adjusted that neither victim could feel aggrieved. In another dispatch Mencken quotes some remarks of Major Curran, head of the Association Opposed to the Prohibition Amendment, making him say in one place that the women wets "leaped at the opportunity to give the dry evangelists a beating, and they certainly did the job in a hearty and spectacular manner". Surely no one ever spoke like that but H. L. M.

Prohibition is the largest single subject in the book, which would have been justified by Mencken's ability to make amusing copy out of it even if it had not actually been the chief issue of debate. Mencken was taken by surprise by the sudden collapse of the dry cause in both conventions. The Republican stampede amazed him, and afterward he half expected the Democrats to be less bold, certainly no bolder. But finally he saw prohibition killed before his eyes; as he announced in his article of June 30, "Since one o'clock this morning Prohibition has been a fugitive in the remote quagmires of the Bible Belt . . . where Genesis has the police behind it and an unbaptized man is as rare as a metaphysician". Let us hope he recognized this as in some measure a personal triumph: no one has fought more effectively against prohibition through the last thirty years.

Oddly enough, the weakest chapter in *Making a President* (the penultimate) is not one of the bulletins from the line of fire, but a regular Monday piece written several days after the adjournment. There is a printer's error in the date of the final article, making Mencken appear to celebrate the Democrats' prohibition plank a month before it was born. The date should be July 11. There is also an astounding number of "widowed" lines for so short a book, including one with but one word in it. But doubtless there had to be some very fast press work to get the benefit of the book's timeliness. It is something less than an immortal masterpiece, but it is worth a dozen such fiascos as *A Treatise on the Gods* and *A Book of Prefaces.* S. C.

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A SELECTED SHELF

THE DISCOVERY OF EUROPE *by Paul Cohen-Portheim* (DUTTON. $3.00)

EVEN after the careful study which it deserves as the successor to the same author's two distinguished works, *Time Stood Still* and *England, the Unknown Isle*, one is left without knowing just what to make of *The Discovery of Europe*. Mr. Cohen-Portheim is attempting to salvage what he believes to be a fast sinking Europeanism by vividly calling the plight of his continent to the attention of Europeans and particularly of Englishmen, upon whom he very frankly places the responsibility of rescue from the twin threats of Americanization and Russification. For one thing, the book is really two books, with but little apparent connection. The first part is an analysis of the decline of Europeanism and of the growing influence from the East and from across the Atlantic. It is historio-philosophical in tone, reflecting clearly the means if not the conclusions of the Spengler school of thought. And being what it is, it can scarcely escape comparison with Señor Ortega y Gasset's recent *The Revolt of the Masses*, which treats of the same subject in the same way—though to be sure only as a means to a greater end.

The first result of such a comparison is a feeling that Mr. Cohen-Portheim might well have devoted a little more time to the study of the mass mind in which, in the broadest sense, Ortega finds the reason for the gradual downfall of Europeanism. For in analyzing the present situation, Mr. Cohen-Portheim has apparently been moved only by outward signs, by such things as moving-pictures and the press, by architecture and restaurants. He has neglected the sociological, one might even say the biological, aspects of present-day Europe. Thus he has concerned himself only with the activities of the upper classes, the rulers and leaders whom Señor Ortega sees rapidly succumbing to, and replaced by, the turbulent mass. This preoccupation with outward signs is found nowhere more pronouncedly than in his somewhat extravagant accusation of Americanism (he makes it clear that he is not arraigning America, but only its influence abroad), where he argues that the influence of American films and of the American sensational press are prime agents in the de-Europeanization of Europe. Obviously Mr. Cohen-Portheim chooses to believe that Europe has been an unwilling party to this American seduction; but with the facts and Señor Ortega's supremely objective delineation of the European masses at hand, one cannot but feel that Europe has been at least as much to blame as this country. As Ortega points out, America is no more than a conglomeration of the European masses, much younger and therefore much more capable of first making the mis-steps which the present European masses have been so ready to repeat.

Of the second half of the book, however, one can speak with greater pleasure; it consists of Mr. Cohen-Portheim's reminiscences of pre-War Europe, the delightfully written memoirs of a true European equally at home in Vienna, Prague, Berlin, Paris, and London, and much travelled throughout the Con-

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tinent. His real reason for including them is as a reminder of how good the good old days were, as a kind of bait for his philosophy of antiquarianism, of a return to the pleasantly distant Europe of the seventies and eighties; but for this one can forgive him. He has, in fact, made his favourite period so attractive that one sighs with him for a return of at least its advantages. His racily written sketches of the social and cultural life of pre-War capitals, his quick analyses of national characteristics, reveal Mr. Cohen-Portheim in his true vein: that of interpreter and *raconteur*. This is his *métier*, and one hopes earnestly for the pleasure of reading more of this latter kind of work from his pen.

ALFRED M. FRANKFURTER

SWINBURNE: A LITERARY BIOGRAPHY *by Georges Lafourcade* (MORROW. $4.00)

IT IS necessary to say at once that this book lives up to its sub-title: it is a *literary* biography. That is rather a pity, as some of us who were rightly disappointed in Gosse's too gentlemanly *Life* were still hoping for the personal story which, as one English writer puts it, "if it were truthfully told, would be as incredible as a giraffe". But, so far as Swinburne the person is concerned, Dr. Lafourcade is so reticent that we feel ourselves almost more in the dark at the end of the book than we were at the beginning.

Dr. Lafourcade is out to prove that Swinburne the poet had a lot more to say than any of us ever gave him credit for; and that he was "essentially a modern". Now that last phrase has a despairing note in it: for Swinburne, to most of us, is not entirely separable from the pre-Raphaelites who fathered him or from the Aesthetes whom he fathered. Where he differed from, and came above, either group was in the fact that he made better sounds than either; until Dr. Lafourcade came along, nobody has cared to say that he made better sense.

This biography, after discussing his childhood and showing his early masochistic tendencies, divides his subsequent activity into three main periods: 1855-1866, his pre-Raphaelite or more exactly his *l'art pour l'art* period when—so Lafourcade claims—"he struck the emotional bedrock of pure passion"; 1866-1872, his Mazzini, or United Italy, or Universal Republic period, when he wrote *Songs Before Sunrise* and "gained in depth and unity of thought"; and 1872-1909 when the lyrist had disappeared and "what he wrote or did was only a commentary or *scholia* to the early part of his career". All these stages are fully documented: but you cannot help feeling as you read that Dr. Lafourcade's facts are saying one thing and his fancies another.

The facts are the result of such a thorough and scholarly research that it seems improbable that we shall hear anything new about Swinburne, as a literary figure, for a great many years to come: from this point of view the book is a valuable one. But the fancies are another thing. In the first place, Swinburne the lyrist of *Poems and Ballads* is "essentially a modern". Why? Because he "struck the emotional bedrock of pure passion", I suppose. I am not sure that this has any very definite meaning, unless we interpret it in the light of what, under the pseudonym of Herbert Harvey, Swinburne may have written about himself: "Il se livre tout entier, éperduement, sans retour, à la poursuite de la Volupté . . . *avec une suprême indifférence de tout ce qui n'est pas elle*". The italicized words should prove that there was nothing very "modern" about Swinburne's sexual poetry—certainly not in Lafourcade's

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sense that he was akin to D. H. Lawrence, or that he has had the least influence upon contemporary English poetry. From the moment when, after a long apprenticeship, Swinburne began to write original poetry, he never developed, either emotionally or intellectually. And his public dimly realized that and dropped him.

His sudden departure from *l'art pour l'art* for Mazzini and United Italy was little more than an escape from emotions he had exhausted. Dr. Lafourcade's facts prove inexorably that he had little to offer but "rhodomontade about Liberty and Priests and Kings", as Miss Woods has said; Dr. Lafourcade's fancy insists in vain upon a "modern sensibility" behind it all. Indeed, it was only when the poet in him had disappeared that Swinburne really began to think; and Dr. Lafourcade gives us, in his story of the Watts-Dunton period, an excellent account of Swinburne as critic—a critic whose intuition was sounder than his reason, who indulged in petty controversy, and had a genius for invective.

After reading this book I still feel that we have not been unjust to Swinburne when we admire him for the choruses of *Atalanta* in particular, and for the originality and splendour of his rhythm in general; when we admit his virility but say it is a virility of style not of content; when, in fact, we declare that the style is the man. Against this opinion Dr. Lafourcade has nothing to offer but a terrific vagueness:—"In the bright classical metaphors of Atalanta, in the turgid rhetoric of his prose, there lurks a modernity of inspiration which reveals him as akin to masters like Proust or Lawrence". No, this simply won't do. As the Maharajah says, in Mr. J. R. Ackerley's *Hindoo Holiday*, "what is lurk?"

GEORGE DANGERFIELD

MARK TWAIN'S AMERICA *by Bernard DeVoto* (LITTLE, BROWN. $4.00)

Mr. DeVoto has, for several years past, been devoting himself to the eminently humane task of reconstructing the pioneer society which produced that most American of all our writers, Mark Twain. Mr. DeVoto, as his admirers know, is a native of Utah. His birth in 1897 is not too recent to have deprived him of contact with our last surviving and scattered frontiers in the Far West, and he is therefore eminently fitted to investigate and describe a frontier society. His findings are well worth the perusal of any effete Easterner or Middle Westerner unlucky enough never to have lived on a frontier, and yet an inevitable inheritor of the frontier. The present reviewer has had the good fortune to spend a good many years on one of the oldest frontiers perennially surviving on this continent, the northern marches of the Province of Quebec. If it is at all true that such societies have always much in common, then, judging by the present reviewer's knowledge, Mr. DeVoto has done a difficult task exceptionally well.

Of course the Missouri version of the great American westward movement was complicated, as Mr. DeVoto points out, by two great facts: the presence of Negro slavery, and the settlers' general tendency to malaria and other cognate ills occasioned by the nature of the country. There was likewise the inevitable element of cosmopolitanism, if it can be dignified by such a name, supplied by the Mississippi. Out of the richness of this soil grew a typical folk humour, the "Tall Tales" of the southwest, which first found written expression in the thousands of pioneer newspapers that grew up all through the country, and on one of which Mark worked out his first apprenticeship. Here appeared the work

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of some scores of authors—in reality a native school of humour whose very existence is unknown to most of us today, except in the works of its culminating genius, Samuel Clemens. In making clear Mark Twain's relation to this group, and in showing how his chaotic genius owed its form to the society in which it was nurtured, Mr. DeVoto has done great service to the history of American letters.

A large part of *Mark Twain's America* is devoted to destroying utterly Van Wyck Brooks's, Lewis Mumford's, and Waldo Frank's distortion of its protagonist. It is too bad that Mr. DeVoto had to give so much space, entertainingly as he does it, to attacking this extraordinary critical aberration. Unfortunately the seriousness with which it has been taken by only too many otherwise intelligent people makes this rebuttal necessary.

One can find fault with some of Mr. De Voto's appraisals of Mark Twain's work, but to do so would be petty in the light of the achievement of his book as an interpretation of one of the primary elements in American cultural history.

HARRY LORIN BINSSE

THE MARCH OF DEMOCRACY *by James Truslow Adams* (SCRIBNER'S. $3.50)

WHEN Mr. Adams published his first volume of New England history, *The Founding of New England,* ten or eleven years ago, academic historians realized that they had an "amateur" competitor, worthy of their mettle. Mr. Adams's first book was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for American History. Ever since, he has been bringing out volumes on the history of this country all of which are at the very least readable and written from a fresh point of view. Unfortunately one has an impression that the volumes which followed the first three on New England have not been based on as careful a scholarship as distinguished the earlier work. This becomes clear when one compares those sections of Mr. Adams's later books which are concerned with the colonial and early federal history of New England with the sections devoted to other times or regions. Readers of *The Adams Family* will recall that the treatment of the early Adamses was far fuller, more vivid, and more carefully documented than that of the more recent members of the family.

The present volume is the first of a two-volume history of the United States. It deals with the Colonial period and the first sixty years of the Republic, and therefore represents Mr. Adams's *forte.* For the Colonial period especially it is excellent, and may be recommended as perhaps the best brief, yet up-to-date, treatment of the subject. The section devoted to the discovery and early exploration of the continent is peculiarly well done and is a model of condensation and judicial presentation of evidence, as is likewise the analysis of Colonial government and society. Unfortunately very much less than half of the book is devoted to this longest period in our history, the period spent as a part of the British empire. But it is a relief, after the Beards and the school-book historians, to find even a brief treatment of the Colonies which is judicial and does not attribute everything either to economic forces or to an incredibly enlightened—or stupid—patriotism.

The latter portion of *The March of Democracy* is also excellent, but not quite so distinguished in comparison to other recent treatments of the subject, particularly that of Professor Morison. It is, however, well worth the attention of the general reader, for Mr. Adams's independence of judgment is refreshing and always succeeds in making new

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light shine on old subjects. Particularly notable in this section are the illustrations, which have been very well chosen to give a feeling for the period. They consist of contemporary lithographs, drawings, engravings, newspaper notices, broadsides all calculated to make the reader see the life of which he is reading through the eyes of those who lived it, a use of graphic material which has not yet been as widely practised in this country as it might well be.

A rounded judgement on *The March of Democracy* will have to wait upon the publication of the second volume next February. If this volume is as good as the first, American historical literature will have been enriched with another popular yet scholarly account of our history and civilization.

HARRY LORIN BINSSE

BEVERIDGE AND THE PROGRESSIVE ERA *by Claude G. Bowers* (HOUGHTON MIFFLIN. $5.00)

ACTION was the keynote of Senator Beveridge and of the Progressives; it is the dominating note in Mr. Bowers's excellent biography. He makes tense drama of senatorial debates, renders thrilling the enormous labour of the preparation and writing of the lives of Marshall and Lincoln. The reader must not expect to pause to watch the development of crises, to be taken behind the scenes, to be introduced to Beveridge as a man. His private life is a mere shadow; his psychology unexplained. What went on within him when he was changing from a regular to an insurgent, when he was deciding to join the Progressive Party; what compromises he made with his conscience in the name of politics; what his enemies thought of him and why; these questions are left unanswered. The story is only of the externals of his public life. The author is content to tell a tale of great events and of a man who contributed largely to them.

The Beveridge revealed is one of rugged honesty and ideals, of an almost superhuman capacity for work. The stumping tours, the tariff fight, leave one in amazement that the human frame can stand so much. Through the account one senses that he was no diplomat, that his tongue was bitter, that he was an immense egotist who must have made an unfavourable surface impression on many people. But one readily forgives him when one comes to appreciate the true man beneath. To rise from utter defeat in public life, then to turn one's energies to scholarship and produce the *Life of Marshall* and the unfinished *Lincoln*—this is heroism and greatness.

As always, Mr. Bowers shows no love for Old Guard Republicanism. All of his books have manifested a Democratic bias. This latest venture is an exception only in degree. He believes, as did Senator Beveridge, that a biography of a great public figure should be a picture of the times. In sketching in the historical background, he presents Senator Aldrich as leader of the forces of evil; Taft as a puppet in his hands; and Beveridge, LaFollette, Cummins, and the other insurgents as crusading knights. But this is probably not amiss. Too much American history has been written by Republicans.

And the timeliness of this biography gives it importance, in addition to its intrinsic worth. The Progressive Era, when the American people seemed to be rising to a true liberalism and practical idealism, ended abruptly in the World War, to be followed by the return to normalcy of Harding and the silent respectability of Coolidge. The crash has come. The American people are shaken. They should be urged, nay required to read

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this book, to see that not so long ago there were men in public life who had ideals and were willing to fight for them even when they knew it meant defeat. They should be proud of Beveridge and his friends; they should demand more Beveridges to meet the present emergency.

JOHN E. LOCKWOOD

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS *by Bennett Champ Clark* (LITTLE, BROWN. $3.75)

BOTH the strength and the weakness of this book lie in the author's refusal to adhere to either of the two biographical schools now most in vogue—the psychological and the sociological. If any career ever spoke for itself, that of John Quincy Adams did. In the *Education of Henry Adams* and the *Degradation of the Democratic Dogma*, Henry and Brooks Adams have provided some personal observations that supplement their grandfather's exhaustive diary; they have also thrown light on the political and economic struggle between their family and State Street. Possibly, therefore, the sole function of J. Q. A.'s biographer should be to arrange, condense, and refurbish the facts that the family itself has recorded and interpreted. And since no form of literature is more painfully familiar than the psychological or the sociological biography that fails to come off, the malicious critic might give thanks that Mr. Clark had the good sense to refrain from both the one and the other.

But the really petulant critic will not let it go at that: he will add two positive objections. First, the best excuse for a new biography of John Quincy Adams is that it should offer new material or new interpretation of old material. Any good encyclopaedia provides all the facts that the superficial student requires and the old gentleman's diary offers a standing challenge to the energy of the more curious. Mr. Clark has added nothing new. In the second place, no biographer ever writes without *some* point of view, and Mr. Clark's is that of a Missouri Democrat and this side idolater of Jefferson and Jackson. It is therefore hardly an exhilarating experience to receive from the hands of the western pony express so pedestrian an account of the greatest Adams of them all, and to discover that the democratic dogma of one hundred years ago has been transformed by this pilgrimage of one thousand miles into the single not very meaningful word—and that coined by Teddy Roosevelt—"Americanism".

All of which does not mean that Mr. Clark's book is either valueless or unreadable. Any effort to revive interest in a President unequalled in all our history for sheer ability cannot be a total loss, and when that effort reveals such industry and common sense as Mr. Clark displays, there is no question of anything approaching dullness. But the character and career of John Quincy Adams arouse such admiration that one automatically demands from his biographer standards of literary excellence, scholarship, and understanding commensurate to the task.

QUINCY HOWE

BLOODY YEARS *by F. Yeats-Brown* (VIKING. $2.75)

ALL of us once possessed the wisdom of children, many of us have since acquired the wisdom of the world, a very few have completed the circle and rediscovered the simple childhood values. In Mr. Yeats-Brown these three forms of wisdom exist side by side, but in curious forms. Part of him still lurks in darkest Harrow, part of him turned soldier

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of fortune, and part of him has dabbled with the rudiments of Yoga. One speaks of wisdom in conjunction with *Bloody Years* only because the adventures that it records of the author's three-year imprisonment in Turkey during the War gave him a philosophy of life that consistently overshadows the physical activities to which he devotes almost all his space. The cloudy moralizing of his few reflective passages pervades the whole book.

He begins with a brief history of Turkey between 1908 and 1915, written in a style that suggests the collaboration of E. Phillips Oppenheim and Emil Ludwig. The author makes his first personal appearance in Mesopotamia, where he is captured by the Turks when his airplane lands disastrously on enemy territory. He is taken to Mosul and then to central Anatolia where he undergoes great hardships, both mental and physical, having witnessed *en route* other sufferings far worse than his own. Being an officer with an apparently limitless bank account, he cashes checks right and left and finally makes his way to Constantinople where his money and ingenuity enable him to escape but not to evade capture some weeks later. He is placed in a crowded dungeon out of which he bribes his way into solitary confinement and again escapes, this time on the eve of the Armistice.

Mr. Yeats-Brown's most engaging quality is his perfect sincerity; one admires it even more than his courage and resourcefulness. But his style is melodramatic and his mental processes would do credit to a Spanish anarchist. Like his previous *Lives of a Bengal Lancer*, this book contains a self portrait of precisely the type of British officer that excited such admiration and bewilderment among the French during the War, the type that has become familiar in the writings of Paul Morand, Jean Giraudoux, and André Maurois. But if *Bloody Years* is slightly inferior to its predecessor as autobiography, it is more valuable in another respect. West European rivalries are commonly regarded as the chief cause of the last war and a likely cause of the next one. Mr. Yeats-Brown, trained in India and jailed in Turkey, redresses the balance. He first shows that Levantine policies led directly to the assassination at Serajevo, and then, by glorifying the military virtues not only in the West but in the East, he helps to keep alive the grand old spirit of 1914.

QUINCY HOWE

A HALF-DAY'S RIDE *by Padraic Colum* (MACMILLAN. $2.00)

ANYONE who reads these essays of Padraic Colum's can claim with good reason that he has heard Padraic Colum talk. His spoken sentences have the same long, rhythmic swing, his spoken thought the same clarity and originality; and in his conversation there is the same erudition so easy to take for granted when it occurs casually and so surprising in its range and depth when one considers it in retrospect.

The essays cover a wide sweep of the earth's surface and several strata of its inhabitants. You walk with Padraic Colum on the volcanic hills of Hawaii and stroll with him in the well-tamed parks of France. You meet poets, pedlars, "Miss Europe", a couple of midgets, the lady caretaker of an aquarium, and an anonymous young person with whom he climbs to the top of the Eiffel Tower. In another writer the jump might seem great from a thirty-sou circus to the plays of Plautus, but Padraic Colum wants to tell you how to get the full flavour of Plautus's "whipped-up speeches". The comedies, he says, were "produced in the market-

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place, with people standing in the sunlight to watch them, or seated on a horseshoe of benches, or looking out of windows, or mounted on public monuments. For that reason one should be inclined to ask of a play of Plautus's, 'Is it good circus?' rather than 'Is it good theatre?'"

From Bobby Burns to the poets of the Appalachians is but a stone's throw, as Padraic Colum takes you. A collection of the mountain people's poetry, he says, "shows indications of the sort of life out of which a Burns might have come". Indeed these people did migrate from the north of England a few centuries ago, bringing their songs with them, and since then theirs has been a closed life, poetically speaking, "because, I suppose, there is no differentiation in their culture, no contrasting (yet not alien) element that could prove fertilizing, no culture in the sense of a metropolitan outlook that has been formed by an awareness of philosophy, art, and high politics inside and outside their own boundary, with a national consciousness added".

Padraic Colum does not confine his attention to the arts which appeal to the higher senses. He is not above appreciating the pleasures of taste. He likes all cakes, he says, except chocolate cakes. When he sees people eating them, "it is as if I saw them reading the longer poems of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Chocolate cakes are not for me". Neither does he care for ostriches as beasts of burden bereft of their one glory. "With ostriches I have an only imperfect sympathy," he says. "They are at once light-headed and heavy-footed; that knot on the top of their neck which is their head must leave them practically brainless."

Padraic Colum says that a well-known sentence of Plautus is habitually given too great significance because it is divorced from its context. The sentence is: "To me nothing human is alien". In its fullest meaning it applies to Padraic Colum. Indeed for human one might substitute animal, vegetable, and mineral.

NORAH MEADE

WASHINGTON SWINDLE SHEET *by William P. Helm* (BONI. $2.50)

THE EXPOSURE books continue to come down upon Washington like the locusts, but here is one by an author who signs his name and bases his writing on official record instead of retailing backstairs gossip anonymously. Mr. Helm's theme is the huge size of Senate, House, and White House expense accounts—Congressional mileage; costs of committees with their travels; special investigators and supplies; maintenance of Senate barber shop; the mounting up of many little considered trifles. He speaks principally of the Senate expenses, and of the fiscal year ended June 30, 1931.

The rather sensational title of the book comes from the fact that in newspaper slang an expense account is a swindle sheet, and from the rather sensational twelfth sentence in the body of the book: "In fact, every Senator starts his public career by perpetrating a petty swindle upon the people of the United States". This swindle, it is explained, is the taking of mileage money at forty cents a mile, or about four times what it costs to travel, for the trip from home to Washington. An old practice, sanctioned by age, it is followed by all, and Californians and Nevadans got their mileage for coming to the special Senate session which followed four days after regular adjournment in July, 1930.

Next Mr. Helm tells of committees, how they hire investigators, travel about, tip lavishly, get mineral water in thirty-one-dollar lots when they are on fishing trips for the

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investigation of wild life, purchase revolvers when they are chasing communists, charter two houseboats from December 30, 1930, to January 3, 1931, for $1,687.50 while looking at a national park site in Florida, and uniformly spend high. He tells of the cost of maintaining turkish baths and a restaurant for Senators; of the $125-a-member stationery allowance, which may be drawn in cash while committee stationery may be obtained free; of relatives on the payroll, a matter in which he says the House excels the Senate. Finally he speaks of the cost of maintaining the White House, which he says has risen under Hoover because, for instance, there are now three instead of one White House Presidential secretaries. The book is full of figures, but they are entertainingly presented and explained.

DAN C. ANDERSON

THE CAUSES OF EVOLUTION *by J. B. S. Haldane* (HARPERS. $2.00)

FOR most of us, evolution means the theory of natural selection, and our knowledge of the subject begins and ends with Darwin. We are inclined, in other words, to ignore both the post-Darwinian explanations of the evolutionary process and the data accumulated since Darwin's time. This book summarizes the immense number of interesting and sometimes startling facts which have been piled up by paleontologists, botanists, zoologists, and bio-chemists with unprecedented rapidity during the past twenty years, and which anyone who today pretends to an opinion on evolution must take into account.

Mr. Haldane is one of the very few pure scientists who, when they write for a lay public, stick to science and stay out of philosophy, sociology, and international politics. His presentation of the paleontological and experimental data which have led to various modern explanations of the evolutionary process is admirably unimpassioned, and his conclusions are guarded and confessedly speculative. Stated in over-simple terms, they are mainly two. First, that evolution can probably be explained in terms of the capacity for variation of individual organisms and the selection exercised on them by their environment (only the latter having been stressed in Darwin's time), thus excluding (for Mr. Haldane) the action of a mind or minds higher than that of the evolving individuals. Second, that for the first time there has arisen the possibility that the human mind can take partial charge of the evolutionary process, giving reason for the hope that in the next few thousand years the speed of evolution may be vastly increased.

The subject which Mr. Haldane is treating is so complex, particularly in its mathematical aspects, that only a few will be capable of fully comprehending all he writes (needless to say, the writer is not among them). Many, however, will enjoy the less abstruse chapters of this excellent book, and nearly everyone will be interested in the several conclusions which the author tentatively states.

MARVIN MCCORD LOWES

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FOUR NOVELS OF THE MONTH

THE latest book by William Plomer, THE CASE IS ALTERED (*Farrar & Rinehart. $2.50*), is nothing to give to an invalid. It might even bring about a certain mental and physical queasiness in the most robust constitution, for the dramatic climax of Mr. Plomer's tale of a London lodging-house is a nauseating murder; yet the novel is fascinating.

Its fascination lies not wholly or even mainly in the case of pathological jealousy which the author explores in detail, but in the quality of his mind and the opinions about the state of the world—in particular the state of England—which he sets forth with savage candour. A craftsman only a degree less skilful would have overloaded his fictional structure in trying to convey a tenth of Mr. Plomer's convictions, but the story as fiction is fully as engrossing as the underlying ideas it illustrates. *The Case Is Altered* stands up true and straight; whether the individual reader will loathe it or love it depends entirely on his response to these ideas.

Mrs. Fernandez ran a lodging-house at 45 Cambodia Crescent; and lest you should fail to realize that the lodging-house typifies England today, and has been chosen precisely because such an abode is the home of the deracinated, the classless and the decadent, the author draws your attention to his metaphor again and again. Mrs. Fernandez is bright, vital, beautiful, a foreordained victim, a woman running almost lustfully to her own murder; and she is a Jewess. To Mr. Plomer her race is significant: "And in her Jewishness Mrs. Fernandez was typical of the spirit of the age, which is Jewish, feminine, and paradoxical. The little movements of her life were like the large movements of the world we live in—a world which, for better or worse, centers everything in sex and material things, a world which thinks of everything in terms of capitalism and communism, a world without great artists, but full of cravings to be 'artistic', a world without religion in fact, a world which seeks negation instead of the godlike, desires death, perhaps, rather than life".

Not a character in the story but has to bear this double burden of typifying an aspect of modern life and of contributing in some manner to Mrs. Fernandez's death. Miss Brixworth, the decayed gentlewoman, Mrs. Gambitt who would have so loved to be a decayed gentlewoman, Alston, the questing grocer's clerk (who alone, by a fortunate fluke, emerges into a happy life), the ineffectual Rudds, the undisciplined servants, all are at once accomplices, by their inertia, of the mad Fernandez, and victims of a society which in falling into decay no longer exacts individual responsibility from them nor, in circumscribing them, sustains them.

This is largely what Mr. Plomer has set himself to say in his formidable indictment: "It is the individual mystery not the common citizenship that works the greatest changes. [And change is valuable, is inevitable, Mr. Plomer feels.] . . . But an individual is nothing unless he is related to a society or to some vital movement within a society". He says it thoroughly and explicitly over and over (although many of his convictions are less

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validly axiomatic than this), throwing all his findings in the reader's face with a contemptuous "Q.E.D." at the end. He is as avowed (and in many ways more effective) an enemy of complacency and sham as Mr. Wyndham Lewis, the tortuous involutions and obscurities of whose work will always keep many potentially interested readers from his books. *The Case Is Altered* presents no such superficial difficulties: it is clear, straightforward, and compact. It will probably go on adding appalled and fascinated readers long after its term as this season's book is run.

The two central characters of Edith Wharton's earlier *Hudson River Bracketed*, Halo Tarrant and Vance Weston, come together in THE GODS ARRIVE (*Appleton. $2.50*) as lovers barred from marriage by the selfish obduracy of Halo's husband. The whole novel is the record of Halo's attempt to make an enduring relation between her lover and herself against the odds of social disapproval, the novelist's temperament of Weston, and the insecurity which, she comes at last reluctantly to recognize, must always be present when there is not the actual, legal tie of marriage to hold the man and woman together through the ordeals of loss of rapture, outbursts of individualism, and crises of pride. In the process of bringing her lovers to the realization that marriage is a vital and necessary bond, Mrs. Wharton carries them through the literary worlds and half-worlds of Spain, France, and Italy; and Weston gets his fill of literary London and America as well.

It goes without saying that *The Gods Arrive* is one of the important books of the year. Mrs. Wharton has never, in the deepest sense, evaded the responsibilities of her gift. It would be impossible for her to turn out a novel on a superficial theme, or have superficial convictions on her subject. She is firmly established in the public regard and in critical esteem, so I approach with some trepidation the thankless task of setting down a heterodox opinion.

It was disturbingly noticeable in *Hudson River Bracketed*, and even more uncomfortably obtrusive in the present book, that when Mrs. Wharton turns from her central figures to the secondary characters, when she is writing of the literary and social Bohemia which she loathes, she is frequently content to put her artistry aside and to write as a journalist. These Parisian studio parties, and the sketches of figures for them—is there not something distressingly like Sunday-supplement comment and observation about them? This American sculptor, Brank Heff, who says to a dancer whom he wants to use as model: "I guess you'd do first rate"—did he ever have his being outside a London hack-writer's imagination? Do the Mrs. Glaishers of this world think and talk about themselves as "society women"? I am unable to believe it, and my incredulity, spreading and deepening, begins to flow over and obliterate the impressions of the central characters themselves. I remember withholding judgement when I found Mrs. Wharton making her hero say, of the Duke of Spartivento, "I wonder what's become of Alder's duke—you remember, the one with the name like the clanging of shields", and retroactively enlightened by the unbelievable talk put into the mouths of the Paris group, I return and say flatly that such a phrase as "the name like the clanging of shields" never issued from a human throat in a sober moment.

And so this almost frivolous sketching of the secondary characters as subhuman caricatures undermines the importance of *The Gods Arrive*. One admits the gravity and interest of the theme, the dramatic effectiveness

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of many of the dilemmas which Halo and Vance are forced to meet; but, made wary by the Mrs. Glaishers and Brank Heffs, one looks for—and finds, alas—evidence that not even the figures of Halo and Vance have been spared the touch of the manipulating hand. That this discovery is not fatal, that one does not lay aside the book at the moment when suspicion becomes certainty, means that Mrs. Wharton is still Mrs. Wharton and that her second rate is better than many another author's best.

There may be readers who can plunge light-heartedly into a book which is avowedly a family chronicle without one backward glance at their loved ones, without a single sigh. They will not have to be urged to read INHERITANCE, by Phyllis Bentley (*Macmillan. $2.50*); they will know it for their natural meat. Some of us are not so; what others call sustained power we are likely to call long-windedness, and the very thought that a family tree must be provided as frontispiece or end-paper for ease in consultation—say when the third generation gets well under way—afflicts us like a headache. We were, in all likelihood, seduced into reading *The Forsyte Saga* because it edged into our view under another aspect, and having read it we have had enough.

These shameful prejudices are set down here to show the extent of my surrender to *Inheritance*. I embarked on it with a sigh, and sighs came thick and fast for about a chapter. Then suddenly I was off as avidly as the maddest saga-lover of them all. Miss Bentley has chosen a country that she loved, a trade that she knew, a dramatic period so close to us all that we frequently overlook its dramatic quality, and has made a thoroughly good book out of them. Her country is Yorkshire, the trade she celebrates is the weavers' trade, and the period, at the book's opening, only a little over a hundred years ago. This excellent choice has meant that she could carry her long and involved novel through almost every phase of the struggle between master and man, telling the history of the English industrial period as she did so.

The first William Oldroyd arose from among his men by shrewdness and insight. The Luddites murdered him, and the quarrel that followed separated William's son from his sweetheart, since Mary Bamforth's brother, Joe, was one of the men who swung for the murder. So Mary bears and rears her illegitimate son, and William marries a hearty, worthy creature and has another son by her. After her death he is reunited to Mary, and from these two sons, the morbid idealist and the hard-headed practical man, spring the widely divergent branches of the family.

I closed the book as reluctantly as I opened it. The Bamforths and the Oldroyds had provided a great deal more than diversion. Miss Bentley's style will never set any bonfires, and she has the distracting habit of seeming to fall in love with a word almost accidentally and thrusting it forward thereafter at every opportunity: when one character has panted out an answer, you may be sure that panting will become an epidemic, and two characters make two *moues* in as many pages. The incidental women whom the male characters of the book marry are as lightly sketched and indeterminate as the Daughters of Earth in Genesis. Yet the book moves easily and sturdily along, carrying the reader's interest from generation to generation, and may make innumerable converts to saga-reading. I am warier game than that, but I cheerfully engage to read, hereafter, not only any matriarchal novel G. B. Stern cares to write (she has long been one outstanding exception),

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but any book at all with Phyllis Bentley's name on the cover.

Each novel by Rosamond Lehmann is better than the last. *Dusty Answer,* I confess, seemed to me the rather forced book of a young author impatient to be about the business of writing but unwilling to wait for an idea to ripen fully. *A Note in Music* was better, both as observation and as writing. But INVITATION TO THE WALTZ (*Holt.* $2.00), light and delicate as the music that gives it its name, is fully mature, tender, and humourous.

Miss Lehmann takes a seventeen-year-old girl through a week of her life—from her birthday to the night of her first dance. It is a subject full of pitfalls; sentimentality would have ruined it, and humour at the expense of adolescence has been done to death. Olivia lives in reference to her own age; she is no saintly doll for an adult, or the butt of an adult's malicious wit. Her family is done through Olivia's eyes: a father, mother, and uncle only half-real, an older sister warmly loved, a younger brother loved adoringly.

This younger brother deserves a word to himself. There are probably not twenty pages of space devoted to James throughout the book, but many a reader will remember him until death—James who goes on nature-walks, recites original poems in a sing-song, and gives birthday gifts that break one's heart. For the sake of the picture of James alone, I would be ready to hail Miss Lehmann as a genius.

DOROTHEA BRANDE

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KEEPING UP WITH THE NOVELISTS

A BROKEN JOURNEY *by Morley Callaghan* (SCRIBNER'S. $2.00)

MORLEY CALLAGHAN is a gifted writer who has never quite succeeded in becoming a novelist: and *A Broken Journey* is a failure, all the more complete because it is constantly trembling on the rim of success. Its characters are entirely credible; its situations are deftly introduced and deftly linked; its descriptive passages often show an exquisite sense of detail; its style is sometimes beautiful. But each successive crisis—so carefully prepared, so faithfully reported—flickers out like a damp squib: and what should be a drama of fate ends like an exercise in the simpler kinds of irony.

Callaghan starts out with great dexterity to show us a mother and daughter who are in love with the same man. Mrs. Gibbons, sex-starved and sex-obsessed, has begun to have the courage of her desires when it is already too late to indulge them. Marion Gibbons has the passion with which to understand her mother and the honesty with which to despise her. Nobody could help admiring Callaghan's handling of this situation—that is, up to the moment when mother and daughter confront each other, not only with their love for Peter Gould but with their points of likeness and difference. That confronting is the first crisis and the first damp squib: for the two women are subdued by the pure irony of their situation.

Marion throws Peter over, and he in his turn, rejecting Mrs. Gibbons's awkward advances, retires into a sort of Tweedledum and Tweedledee existence with his devoted and parasitical brother. Mrs. Gibbons, her last defences broken down, confesses that she once refused to love a man until it was too late: and it is only then that Marion decides to seek out her Peter. But she in her turn comes too late. Peter has injured his spine in a heavy fall and is thereafter never able to leave his bed. Marion has all her mother's sensuality, and she is driven at length into the arms of a young woodsman —and thence home, in sheer disgust at herself.

This is obviously a novelist's theme—the daughter trapped by the consequences of her mother's weakness and dishonesty; and there is certainly nothing wrong with Mr. Callaghan's intentions. But the reason for his failure is no less obvious. It can be summed up in one word. Irony.

There are two kinds of irony. There is irony which is no more than a pure and elementary relationship between one event and another: and there is another irony, impure and splendid, which raises life into tragedy. Mr. Callaghan perceives the first all too clearly: with the second he is quite unfamiliar. Mr. Callaghan's people are only alive by their awareness of an ironical relation between persons and events. Their consciousness, at its most acute and most articulate, is a sort of resignation.

Fiction can only be achieved by a certain distortion of fact, and by a deliberate selection and rearrangement of experience. Mr. Callaghan is too honest to distort. And he

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does not select: he condenses. *A Broken Journey* is half a dozen novels, for its author sees too many things and sees them too clearly; and rather than disturb his ironical pattern of life by lifting out of it only what is pertinent, he tries to compress it all into one simple action after another. In his strict and understated world the best motives and the liveliest characters must come pretty close to extinction: the skill with which they are brought into it is cancelled by the honesty which destroys them once they have got there.

Yet Callaghan is a writer for whom one is bound to have a very real admiration, not merely for his occasional brilliance and the graces of his style, but because his failure is the failure of a man who is uncompromising and direct—a sort of Holman Hunt of literature, cursed with clear eyesight. To those who believe that an author's intentions can be splendid even in defeat *A Broken Journey* is hereby sincerely recommended.

GEORGE DANGERFIELD

THE LAUGHING PIONEER *by Paul Green* (MCBRIDE. $2.00)

MANY of the extravagant things that are commonly said about current novels and plays might be said of Paul Green's *The Laughing Pioneer*, but in this case they would actually apply. Here is romance as highflown as *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*, a folk drama as savage and primitive as *Gallows Orchard* was meant to be, a heroine as pathetic as Willa Cather's Lost Lady but imbued, besides, with grandeur; and here is an epic of the soil. At this point one must pause to add that, unlike the innumerable epics of the soil which have recently poured from the presses, *The Laughing Pioneer* does not sprawl. The whole action, although it presents a phase of contemporary history, occupies rather less than a year.

Miss Alice, on her father's death, inherits his ramshackle plantation. Instead of marrying Rorie Armstrong, who is socially eligible but otherwise a weak reed, she opens her doors to an engaging young tramp, who has once or twice stopped at the house to ask for a meal. Daytimes Dannie Lawton works in the fields, mends the roof and the fences, fattens the pigs, and restores prosperity to the neglected estate. Evenings he plays his guitar, sings songs, and tells stories to a woman all of whose lighter moments have previously been spent in reading works on phrenology to her cantankerous father. Dannie Lawton is eighteen years old, a big muscular lad just thickening into young manhood. Miss Alice is thirty. She reminds him, he says, of his mother. He reminds her of girlhood dreams. Rorie Armstrong, the patient suitor, is reminded, for his part, of the wasted years of his unimpassioned courtship. Being at a loose end, he begins to consort with poor whites, and presently finds himself an active, if frightened, member of the Knights of the White Jessamine.

In rehearsing even so much of the story one feels guilty of the folly of trying to skim the cream from a pan that holds nothing but cream. Dannie's first visit to the plantation; Judge Long's demise; the night after Judge Long's burial when Miss Alice drives off, very straight and tall in her surrey, to find Dannie Lawton and bring him back to the plantation; Christmas eve; Rorie Armstrong's initiation into the mystic brotherhood; the clergyman's visit of remonstrance —all these scenes and incidents in *The Laughing Pioneer* exist in a way that such scenes can exist only in a really notable book. It is difficult to overpraise the taste and the sensitive feeling of an author who is able, as

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Paul Green has done, to extract all the brute stimulation that may legitimately be extracted from his foul-minded Vigilantes, yet to throw his high-light on the moral conflict that rages in the breast of his heroine. Paul Green may appear to write the way the birds sing, but he knows what he is writing about. If anyone has any doubts, let him read the prefatory note and then keep an eye on a character named Mr. Tompkins. Those who care for social significance in a story will be glad that in a novel distinguished by so many less debatable virtues Mr. Green has cared not only to consider the social implications but to point them out in a preface.

ROBERTS TAPLEY

BEYOND DESIRE *by Sherwood Anderson* (LIVERIGHT. $2.50)

To REVIEW Mr. Anderson's latest book is an embarrassing task. He is accounted a considerable figure in American letters and the literature of the past decade is heavily indebted to him; at the present time he is something of a social prophet, having allied himself with Communism. The testimony of *Beyond Desire* is that his abilities as a writer and a thinker are scarcely commensurate with his influence. Simple declarative though Mr. Anderson's sentences may be, one could not possibly find a book more difficult to read; he has glutted himself on what Wyndham Lewis calls the "black suet-pudding" of Gertrude Stein's prose, and for the three hundred and fifty-nine pages of *Beyond Desire* he proceeds to nauseate us with his unvarying version of this dish. If Miss Stein has any justification for her verbal horse-play, it is that she does achieve a certain hypnotic rhythm, but Mr. Anderson cannot point to as much, and he reminds one of a drunkard, deep in his cups, mumbling endlessly and monotonously the shallow ideas which obsess him. The ideas in *Beyond Desire*, so far as one can discern ideas in those murky pages, seem to be three: that sex is a source of pain and pleasure, that mill-workers are none too well off, that there is something beautiful about machinery. None of these ideas is in itself specious, no more than it is profound; but there still can be too much of a good thing: there can be insistence on hot desire until one longs for the epicene coolness of an Elsie Dinsmore volume; there can be descriptions of the muddled thought-processes of mill-workers until one is ready to believe creatures so brutal deserve to be kept in poverty and subjection; and there can be bathetic, romantic drooling over the mysterious qualities of machines which is merely nonsense. In all these Mr. Anderson indulges to the fullest extent, and the only virtue one can find in these pages is an easy sympathy for the downtrodden and the confused.

Inevitably Mr. Anderson's hero, Red Oliver, is an adolescent; a person of that age provides the exaggerated interest in sex, the objectless longings and lack of clarity in thought on which the author can best exercise his garrulity and repetitiveness. Red, whose social position in the Georgia town of Langdon is uncertain, though he is not a poor white, returns from college and goes to work in the local cotton mill. At college Red had heard of Communism; the book opens with descriptions of letters Red gets from a friend in Kansas who is sleeping with a Communist school-teacher. The teacher's Communism has a rather secondary interest for Red. There follow some tergiversations about Red's parents, the state of the South, the sexual emotions and thoughts of various mill-hands. There is also a bit of dark laughter from the deep, knowing Negroes at the

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expense of the inferior and impotent whites. Then Ethel Long, daughter of the town judge, comes on the scene, and we get *her* reflections on sex—in the South and in Chicago, where a strange man came into her room, as strange men will in Anderson novels. We get a great deal of Ethel, but Red has her only once, in a public library during a thunder storm. Finally Red becomes involved with striking mill-workers directed by Communist agitators, and the story is brought to a close with what may be a tragedy but seems just one more meaningless incident. One has the feeling that Mr. Anderson intended to show that we are all brothers at heart and should get together for the raising of a better world instead of shooting each other at strikers' riots, but one fears that this may be too clear a thought to ascribe to him. If anything in the above should seem to indicate anger with Mr. Anderson, it is a false effect, for one cannot become enraged with this dolefully befuddled naïf who affects the mannerisms of the cracker-barrel sage. That does not mean one cannot become enraged with those who take him seriously as anything but a *reductio ad absurdum* of the broader tendencies in which he is involved.

GEOFFREY STONE

THE BRIGHT TEMPTATION *by Austin Clarke* (MORROW. $2.50)

THIS is quite a charming and original book that at times falls most annoyingly between the two stools of the satiric and the romantic. It is placed in the early days of Irish Christian history, when more than a scent of the pagan still clung to the national life. This confusion between the old and the new standards was naturally reflected in the literature of the time, for which Darrell Figgis some years ago did good service in his *Return of the Hero*, a modernization of a dialogue in which the pagan comes off somewhat better than second best. Austin Clarke has not, as far as I know, selected any one such ancient story for re-telling, though his girl might have easily been taken from one well-known saga. The idyll seems to be his own creation, and an exquisite one it is, which makes one wonder why he did not let it stand as a simple statement of his case and refrain from pointing the moral. Perhaps the pointing would not be so bad if it were done with a fine finger, but it is done with a heavy fist which thrusts itself continually between the reader and the romance.

The story is of Aidan, a student in the clerical schools who has been brought up on the "dark legend of womankind with which young minds in Ireland are still frightened". (It is in this manner that Clarke drags you from romantic past to controversial present.) Roaming one night by the river, he falls in, loses his single garment in the strong current, climbs ashore, and falls asleep beside a lady "grown buxom on bed and buttermilk". He finds it easy to escape her blandishments, but in attempting to regain his seminary he is seized by an Irish counterpart of the three musketeers who bring him to a castle where lives Ethna, then betrothed. She sees him, rescues him, and the two roam away in search of a holy glen. They fall in love and are separated for a time, during which Aidan meets strange and terrible adventures suggestive of the *Inferno*. Re-united they are found sleeping in each other's arms, and "on their cheeks was the foxglove hue of the love-spot".

While searching for her after they have been separated, Aidan decides to seek again his old seminary, Cluanmore, and finds it has become a "place of lust and cruelty, an armed camp of death". At first he is numbed,

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but gradually "his own youth, from which he had fled, was returning". He knows that he will find Ethna, and is filled with hope and courage. When he does find her, he realizes he is "freed forever of the shadowy fears of his early education". The "dark legend" which had haunted him has gone in the smoke of battle, and with it the shackles which had bound his mind and manhood.

There is the beauty of the old sagas in this story, the stir and the colour of the countryside, the echo of tales told by the turf fire and the tasks the women performed. There are monstrous symbolic figures here, too, like the Prompolaun, the newsman who could not think unless he was running. But the symbolism of the story is subordinated to the idyll, and in the main the satire is, too; so that on the whole the book is a welcome addition to a type of Irish literature that is all too little known.

NORAH MEADE

MAGNIFICAT *by René Bazin* (MACMILLAN. $2.00)

IN A treatise on the French novel, Dr. Ashton once said apropos of René Bazin: "Frequently treated with scant courtesy by the critics, Bazin grasped the essential principle that might well be meditated upon by his disparagers. It is that, while love may be but an episode in life, work is inevitable and must go on whether love comes or not".

That was written long before the French publication of *Magnificat*, but it is still true, and in this case it is the work of God which is inevitable. Gildas Maguern, the Breton peasant, is in love with his cousin Anna, a servant accepted as a highly valued equal in his father's house. He has heard the call to the priesthood while still a boy, and he heeds it during the War. Anna has long suspected the existence of a rival she could not name. Rebellious at first, she finally accepts his decision, helps him to attain his ambition, and arranges for herself a life of service on a plane less lofty than that of the man she loves.

From the modern standpoint this is an old-fashioned novel, for it deals with the externals of an internal struggle. Gildas's work is necessary to the financial well-being of his family. His father is ageing, his elder brother dead, and the younger ones due for military service. The problem becomes economic rather than spiritual, except for the girl; and she is the really strong character in the book. The father accepts the inevitable at sight of his son in a priest's cassock, and is eventually ashamed of his earlier opposition. It is not even suggested that for Gildas any struggle was necessary. A more up-to-date writer would probably have concentrated on him.

The book has significance, though that significance is not spectacular enough for current taste. There is clear thinking in it, and hard sense on the subject of spiritual values which before hardship hit this country were scarcely values at all for the great majority of American readers. The setting is appropriate to the theme and so are the hard-headed Celtic characters.

There were stretches of moor with their low walls; a sleepy white horse; whiffs of iodine from seaweed; long vistas of magnificent beeches; black and white cattle; apple orchard after apple orchard; while above, the scurrying clouds were driven before the wind. Granite was everywhere; about the windows, doors and copings of the houses; as boundaries to the fields —Breton granite with its faint sparkle of mica showing through the lichen.

And inside the peasant house a kindly, far-sighted mother, a cluster of children, and a

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pregnant daughter-in-law whose husband has been killed. This is M. Bazin's picture of one of those clear, cold streams that subtend and give strength to the muddier main current of confused contemporary thought.

NORAH MEADE

THE YEARS OF PEACE *by Le Roy MacLeod* (CENTURY. $2.50)

TYLER PECK of Kentucky quarrelled with his mother and, to spite her, took a few drinks and proposed to Evaline Weller, the proud and conscience-stricken daughter of a drunkard. Although Tyler did not love Evaline, he married her because he could not break his word, and with her he began to farm in the Wabash Valley near the large farms of his Uncle Lafe. That was in 1865 and Tyler Peck's heart was bitter with resentment because his three brothers had gone to war and he had been forced to stay behind. From 1865 to 1875 he farmed hard and well, begat six children, matched the guile and fire of his secret being against the bitter stubbornness of his wife, periodically was unfaithful to her with a neighbour's wife, and in all the plentitude of his existence was still haunted by the desire for adventure, for irresponsibility, and for higher pursuits.

Quite the most outstanding feature of Mr. MacLeod's treatment of this material is his extreme objectivity. Presenting such an ironic situation as the simultaneous infidelity of the husband and wife—Tyler seduces Minnie Scott while Evaline guiltily indulges her lust for the onions which her husband loathes—the author reports the incidents soberly and sets them in sharp juxtaposition. Again, faced with the injustice and cruelty of Evaline's treatment of Tyler he has no word of opprobrium for the wife, none of sympathy for the husband. And, curiously enough, Tyler finds Evaline's conduct almost justified.

The morality of these characters is the second curious feature of *The Years of Peace*. That Tyler Peck, who read Shakespeare, Thoreau, Byron, Emerson, and Whitman and who was in no danger of becoming a drunkard, should feel guilty when "caught" by his Uncle Lafe taking a drink on a hunting expedition in dead winter, calls aloud for explanation. Nor were such standards confined to liquor. In spite of the fact that he had already broken with his sole mistress when Uncle Lafe accidentally discovered their past liaison and, ill, died from the shock of that discovery, Tyler felt he had betrayed Uncle Lafe's faith in him, had killed his loved uncle, and meditated suicide. And . . . his tobacco chewing was even done in secret!

Such a morality for 1870 Indiana is startling when presented in a matter-of-fact manner and without comment. But one may concede that Mr. MacLeod knows his characters as well as he does their setting; certainly, his handling of them is decisive.

The two books which are to follow are clearly indicated. For, although *The Years of Peace* descends into all the details of diurnal farm life, there is strong, rapid movement in it. The style is clean, unaffected, and concise, and as each simple farm incident adds its measure to the lines of the characters' lives one's interest in the pattern of the whole increases.

The revery of Hardy's *Tess* will not be found here. One also perceives that Mr. MacLeod's objectivity is not in the service of such moving and highly tragic ends as those of Flaubert's *Bovary*. And, as the success of the objective treatment depends upon the amount and quality of reflection induced in the reader, it may be that the tension and rapid pace of the style militate against the

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most essential response to it. The ultimate proof of *The Years of Peace*, however, rests with its sequels. In itself, it possesses power, continuity, originality, and is easily worthy of being, as it is, the Book League's choice for September.

JOHN BRONSON

SONS *by Pearl S. Buck* (JOHN DAY. $2.50)

"WANG LUNG lay dying." Thus Pearl Buck commences *Sons*, sequel to *The Good Earth*. It treats of the lives of Wang Lung's three sons—of the eldest who sold his inherited lands piecemeal to pay for his concubines and luxuries, of the second who became a mighty merchant and was hated by the farmers, and particularly of the youngest who rose from the rank of common soldier to become a Lord of War and was known as Wang the Tiger.

The Tiger ran away from his father's house because Wang Lung took as his concubine the slave girl, Pear Blossom, whom the boy had secretly loved. His cheated passion made a formidable warrior of him and he was over thirty when he first knew a woman. She was the concubine of a robber chieftain whom Wang had slain, and she cursed the Tiger "with such curses as seldom are heard anywhere they were so rich and vile". But he saw in her the woman to bear him the son for whom he yearned, an heir for his great work. This woman was more savage than he; Wang the Tiger was a just and honourable man and practised his profession with clemency. He loved her with his whole nature; she remained faithful to the memory of the wild robber chieftain and plotted against Wang. When he discovered this he slew her, and at the same time he killed in himself all love for women. Indifferently he took two wives and when a son was born to him directed all his forces into weaning the boy from female influence and into preparing him for the profession of war.

His son is a grave, gentle child who is bored by the art of war and manifests that same love of the earth which had made so splendid a farmer of old Wang Lung. He obediently goes away to a military academy, but when he returns he is a member of the students' revolutionary army, organized to rid China forever of robber chieftain and provincial war lord alike. As the ties of blood are too strong for him to take up arms against his father, he decides to withdraw from the revolution and live in Wang Lung's old earthen house and till the soil.

Thus the cycle is completed and Wang the Tiger drinks his cup of bitterness in the revolt of his progeny even as his father had before him when he heard his two eldest sons plotting to sell the land after his death.

In *Sons*, as in *The Good Earth*, Mrs. Buck manages to combine the intellectual scheme of the modern novel with the simplicity, pungency, and suavity of the Oriental style, which to the Western mind, devoted in these times to the apprehension of reality in all its guises, seems to partake of a legendary quality. But there is also matter for the psychologist and for the social-minded in *Sons*. And it is undoubtedly this fusion of the material of modern literature with the warm medium of the Oriental viewpoint which results in both a novel and a "story" that has secured so enthusiastic a reception for Mrs. Buck's work among our greater reading public.

That public will not be disappointed in *Sons*. Only slightly inferior to *The Good Earth* in human values (possibly because the author is more at home in the soul of a farmer than in that of a warrior) it is far stronger than *The Good Earth* in elements of romance and adventure. And if Mrs. Buck

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does not attempt to capture in English the rarer and more subtly piercing beauties of Chinese thought and feeling, she still gives us a broad, rich, essentially sound view of them. That is valuable.

JOHN BRONSON

SAD INDIAN *by Thames Williamson* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $2.00)

THE sad young Indian who comes to Mexico City with the simple thought of selling his maize and turning back to the village with his burro and money, but who finds himself succumbing to the lure of *pulque* and city decadence, is a sufficient handful for a simple novel such as this, and will, I think, be sufficiently interesting to the reader. The colour and movement of Mexico City makes an attractive background. In the foreground there is Juan, an unusual peon, it is true, in speech and introspection, but still the most interesting picture of the Mexican Indian character I have seen, and at its best the simplest. It is a thousand pities Mr. Williamson did not keep more of his pages simple. To find an interesting character, with natural reticence and yet a natural rightness, whose story is so simple as to dispense with symbolism and psycho-analysis, is a piece of luck; and it is a piece of folly to clutter up the tale with metaphysics and machinations. Two things the reader might rightly complain of: the introduction of a silly character (a distinguished *mestizo*) to tease and plague the Indian with his silly plots; and the half-hearted attempt to make perhaps another *Plumed Serpent* by a quasi-epical notion of the old Indian goddess overcoming the Mexican Christ. I mean that if there are weaknesses in this generally excellent novel they will be found where Mr. Williamson, skilful as he is, is not being quite skilful enough to make us believe that these things are particularly pertinent, even in a novel, to the admirable characterization of the Indian peon, which begins and indeed by itself completely fills the book.

Juan's motives are simple and intelligible; he is possessed of an intuitional wisdom; he would be, from the Mexican point of view, pathetic were this not denied so vigorously, from the Indian point of view, by Juan himself. He violates a market girl out of simple vengeance for a petty theft: it is the easiest way to make her pay. When his burro is stolen and he gives up hope of his village, he continues to live with her because she continues to pay for the *pulque* that is slowly rotting him. Soon he has lost everything that a man can lose, including the blanket woven by his father and stolen by the *mestizo* who has been put into the novel for that purpose. He takes to begging in the street. To escape being sent to jail he is willing to be the Christ in a gaudy and violent church show. When his burro has been found and the wet season is at hand he departs again for his village, a sad and simple and lonely figure, and he departs simply because the wet season is at hand and his burro has been found.

This tale of a city is not an epic, it is an episode; it could happen to Juan again and again. Mr. Williamson has somewhat modified it, thereby dispelling some of its power and impulsiveness, by an undercurrent of sympathetic motivation. The Christ episode becomes a sort of symbol for Juan's own crucifixion, a penance, in some mixed meaning, for his having lived with the mixed bloods whom he detests and also for his having had at some remote period a drop of white blood mixed with his proud Indian strain. That, and more of that, is over-ambitious, I think, and in the novel is a too dramatic derangement of the natural clarity

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of the Indian's mind. With this specific reservation, the narrative is the most vivid and veracious work Mr. Williamson has done; the character of the sad young Indian is in a way comparable to, but much more interesting than, the caricature of the successful old Chinese in Pearl Buck's *The Good Earth*.

PETER MUNRO JACK

WIND DRIVEN *by Jacland Marmur* (THE DIAL PRESS. $2.00)

"NOTHING endures but the sea," says Halvor's father, who spent his life cobbling boots in Svalboden, "the sea and the sky and the stars which appear to us to be so insignificant."

Whether or not in more lucid moments one agrees with this philosophy, while under the spell of Mr. Marmur's beautiful prose the reader is more than willing to agree with anything and everything he says. A deep personal knowledge and love of the sea and ships has gone into the writing of *Wind Driven*. Not the sea as it may be known from the security of the shore or from ships such as carry the cargoes of today, but a sea than can unleash its fury against a white-winged sailing vessel fighting its way for a hundred and twenty days from the Far East to a South American port.

The story of such a voyage fills the first half of the book. Captain Halvor Nettilsen is the Master of the *Bougainville*, his first command, and with him sails his wife, Lela, and the child Nita. The ship has a bad name, but the kindly Halvor, who though an excellent sailor has never "gotten on", says "likely as not it isn't her fault". Though the ship puts up a gallant fight, when she limps past Isla Lebana and into the harbour of Puerto Bueno her reputation has been more than justified. Lela is gone and the Trading Company bankrupt.

From the sea the scene of the story shifts to the land, coming to a climax with the revolution which gave birth to *La Nueva República*. No definite thread of plot binds together the two portions of the book but it is given continuity and interest by the manner in which it is written. It would be worth reading if only as an example of extraordinarily fine descriptive writing. Far more words go into the weaving of the background than into the delineation of the characters, but so simply and with such skill is the pattern woven that its richness, instead of smothering the characters, intensifies them. Few pages are devoted to the love of Halvor for his wife Lela, yet the essence of it permeates the entire book. Little space, also, is given to Nita and the two men who loved her, but the reader will not soon forget them.

Mr. Marmur clothes sentiment, tragedy, and romantic folly in a quiet dignity of language which is genuinely moving. Underlying the mere fiction of the tale is the old theme of man's—or more particularly the dreamer's—restless search for something which endures. For Mr. Marmur the symbol is the ship and the answer the sea.

MILDRED SEITZ

OBSCURE DESTINIES *by Willa Cather* (KNOPF. $2.00)

THESE three stories are composed of nothing which is not familiar in Willa Cather's previous work. The Western scene, the small town, the people, the mood, the ambitions, and the problems are essentially the same. The similarity is so striking that one gathers an impression of paraphrase, although, of course, the plots differ from their predecessors. For instance, it is impossible to read far

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in *Neighbor Rosicky*, the first story in the book, without being reminded intimately of Mr. Shimerda and his family in *My Antonia*. Similarly, Dillon and Trueman in *Two Friends* recall the business men who were friends of the Forresters in *A Lost Lady*. Both facts are noted with some pride on the publisher's jacket. Nor can the third tale, falling into no such obvious similarity, be said to strike a new note in a Cather story. The enlightened, helpful family next door (this time Jewish), the wrong-headed, unsuccessful Templetons pursuing a mode of living brought from a "feudal society" (the Old South) and suffering condemnation in the democratic West, the ambitious daughter, the self-sacrificing grandmother—all these are landmarks among many others along the well-used Catherian way.

Regarded simply as a story, *Neighbor Rosicky* stands forth as the best. At the end of it, the story is finished and becomes as "complete and beautiful" as Rosicky's life seemed to Doctor Ed. The contrast of country and city, damning the latter, has been achieved, and the sons will remain on the farm where, as their father thought, they belong because they are not "mean" types who would do well for themselves in cities. *Old Mrs. Harris* is less conclusive. The grandmother's death leaves too many questions unanswered, too many important characters moving on into a doubtful future. It is more like the first section of an unfinished novel which is too good to remain unpublished, but which would have been better if completed. Miss Cather's method, developed in her two "chronicle" novels, of "touching and passing on" is less effective in a long short story. Not that she has attempted that method here, but rather that its previous use may have led her to believe that such characters as Vickie and Victoria Templeton could be left hanging in mid-air. *Two Friends* is extremely slight. Take from it the beauty and feeling which Miss Cather is able to put into anything she writes, and there would be left only an unconvincing quarrel between old friends who suddenly found themselves disagreeing on Bryan and free silver. Unconvincing not because such things are impossible, but because the author seems to treat the quarrel so perfunctorily. She is more interested in the mood.

This book, then, is a demonstration that Miss Cather is capable of doing again, and just as well, what she has done before. It is difficult to tell how soon her work will lose its vigour and freshness if this course is pursued, but certainly she has nothing new to say on these matters. In several volumes she has preserved that period of the West, its deeds and its sense of values. If she wishes, and is able, to document it further, no one can deny her. But the task, though no one can do it as well as she, is a comparatively small one; our first raptures gone, they will return only when she begins discovering again.

ARCHER WINSTEN

THE FORTRESS *by Hugh Walpole* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.50)

PERHAPS the stuffiness of the era he is treating cramped his style, or perhaps the sinister shadow of the fortress dulled the brisk spirit that characterized *Rogue Herries*. Certainly this third volume in Hugh Walpole's novelized social history is somewhat heavier in touch than his former Herries works. But *The Fortress*, though heavy, is solid. The author is on firm ground. He knows his English countryside, the England of the nineteenth century, the people he writes about; and throughout *The Fortress* Walpole subtly

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shows the effects upon his characters of the Lake Country, of their period, of one another.

Mr. Walpole is obviously more a hereditarian than a behaviourist: Judith Paris is the daughter of a gypsy, and therefore is still the colourful and rebellious figure of the previous novel; her son Adam has her well-balanced recalcitrance, whereas John, son of the weak Francis, is pretty much a coward. *The Fortress* is a chronicle of a family feud; of conflict among those who cling to tradition; and of the play of character upon character. Judith Paris, fifty years old when the book opens, is still dominating and beautiful, and it is she who must fight the stand-patter of the family, Walter Herries, whose hatred carries over into his bitter, deformed son, Uhland, and who builds a fortress overlooking the house wherein Judith, in her hundredth year is still mistress. Walter continues the old Herries' feud until Uhland murders his handsome cousin John, who had been so foolhardy as to marry his enemy's sister. This murder is probably the highest point in the structure of the novel; it is a result of the family feud, it is the culmination of the enmity between the two cousins which is reminiscent of the malevolent and fateful fear of Jennifer (John's mother) for Uhland's father.

A suggestion of foreboding permeates the novel. Actually, the book's atmosphere is more memorable than its historical background. It is the Victorian era, yes; references to Chartism, to Disraeli, to costume and furniture are present; but the period is subservient to the family. It is true that Walpole's chapters on the Reform Movement, on the Chartists, are sufficiently moving to satisfy critics who demand art for society's sake; but even here the significance of the situations are not sufficiently welded to the lives of the protagonists to render them vital to the story.

In short, *The Fortress* is not a historical novel in the sense that Scott's novels are. What remains is not so much the atmosphere of the age itself but the characters of Judith, independent and sparkling; of Jennifer, silhouetted in her long black dress against a bleak background; of hate-blinded Walter and his maladjusted son. They are painted, of course, in the traditional straight-tale manner; Walpole's style is not subterranean. Often it straggles, but on the way we find people in black and white—outlined vividly and behaving consistently. It is with comfortable expectancy that we await the twentieth-century portraits of the Rogue's gallery.

VIVIAN O. WEINER

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THE BOOKMAN'S GUIDE TO FICTION

General

THE GODS ARRIVE *by Edith Wharton* (Appleton)*
The two central characters in Mrs. Wharton's earlier *Hudson River Bracketed* come together as lovers barred from marriage by the selfish obduracy of a husband. Reviewed on page 637.

THE CASE IS ALTERED *by William Plomer* (Farrar & Rinehart)*
Modern England described with savage candour in a novel about a lodging house at 45 Cambodia Crescent. Reviewed on page 636.

INHERITANCE *by Phyllis Bentley* (Macmillan)*
An excellent Yorkshire family chronicle. Reviewed on page 638.

INVITATION TO THE WALTZ *by Rosamond Lehmann* (Holt)
A week in the life of a seventeen-year-old girl, from her birthday to the night of her first dance. Mature, tender, humorous. Reviewed on page 639.

MAGNIFICAT *by René Bazin* (Macmillan)
A quiet novel of a Breton peasant girl who loses the man she loves to God. Reviewed on page 644.

BEYOND DESIRE *by Sherwood Anderson* (Liveright)*
Sex among the mill-workers. Reviewed on page 642.

A BROKEN JOURNEY *by Morley Callaghan* (Scribner's)
A mother and daughter in love with the same man are both cheated of him. Reviewed on page 640.

THE ASPIRIN AGE *by Tia Devitt* (Covici-Friede)
A first novel that mixes finishing-school girls and gunmen. A little too symmetrical in its balancing of the two kinds of lives, but worth reading.

THE LITTLE GOLDEN CALF *by Ilya Ilf and Eugene Petrov* (Farrar & Rinehart)*
Four boisterous Russians steal an auto which subsequently gets named Antelope-Gnu, and voyage all over the Great Russian Experiment, not in the interests of sociological observation. It is all excruciatingly—in fact, painfully—funny.

GRAVE FAIRYTALE *by Esther Meynell* (Stokes)*
A thinly disguised biography of a great musician, told in an exquisite romantic key. Recommended to all music-lovers.

FIRED! *by Karl A. Schenzinger* (Century)
A translated novel describing the arc between employment and unemployment, with deviations into politics, sex, and middle-class family relations. Set in Germany, the scene might be Detroit, Manchester, or New York. The action is well sustained; the book is what a text-book of 1952 will call "writing out of the depression".

NYMPH ERRANT *by James Laver* (Knopf)*
The promiscuous adventures of a boarding-school girl with a Frenchman, a Russian, a German, a Greek, and a Turk. She sees the Riviera, Paris, Bohemia, a Naktkultur camp and several etceteras. A French author would have given his satire more point, but as it is this book is a remarkable *tour de force* to come out of England.

THE WORLD AGAINST MARY *by J. M. Frank* (Dutton)*
A "proletarian" novel in which the cards are stacked against the heroine, not only by the world, but by God and her author. In spite of being thickly buttered with agony and the author's anathemas, it manages to be very moving.

YOUNG LONIGAN *by James T. Farrell* (Vanguard. $3.75)
The boyhood of a young Catholic on the Chicago streets. An absurd pretense is made that the book is being sold only to psychologists and medical men, but, although the novel is outspoken, it is very tame for this generation of readers. Mr. Farrell is too good a writer to need promotion by sly methods.

THEY WINTER ABROAD *by James Aston* (Viking)*
Highly derivative book about a footless group of English men and women in an Italian town. If Norman Douglas had never written a word, this book might have made a stir of its own; on the other hand it would probably never have been thought of.

LETTER FROM AN UNKNOWN WOMAN *by Stefan Zweig* (Viking. $1.25)
Very Schnitzlerian tale, told by means of a farewell letter from a woman to the one man she has loved, although she has taken to refined prostitution to support his son. Perhaps every generation needs to meet this kind of nostalgic Viennese romance.

ROU *by Maurice Genevoix* (Minton, Balch)*
This biography of a haughty cat is confined, so far as one can judge such matters, reasonably well within the limits of the feline psychology, and should make pleasant reading for lovers of these taciturn beasts. It is translated by Alice Grant Rosman and illustrated by Diana Thorne.

THE THREE ROSES *by Vicente Blasco Ibanez* (Dutton)*
A Spanish Becky Sharp falls from a lofty pinnacle

* All prices $2.00 except when followed by asterisk, in which case the price is $2.50.

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in this merry but sketchy story of señoritas, bull fights, and the Spanish stock market. Some fine descriptions of Spanish menus and dinner-time courtesies are easily the most moving things in the book.

THREE BROTHERS AND SEVEN DADDIES *by Harry Harrison Kroll* (Long & Smith)
How Leaf's intelligence helps him win a bride by bending the superstitions and primitive instincts of his neighbours to his own pleasure; for further excitement, one actual murder (several unsuccessful wish-fulfilments), an unfaithful stepmother, and a reluctant father-in-law are provided.

JOHN BARTEL, JR. *by Donald Henderson Clarke* (Vanguard)
Emotional stability steers a young romance away from the divorce courts patronized by the groom's parents to a permanently happy marriage. Plausible dialogue and minute realistic detail serve as cover for lifeless characters and plot.

MORTIMER BRICE, A BIT OF HIS LIFE *by Robert Hichens* (Doubleday, Doran)*
What women did to a young man who couldn't live without them. Sub-erotic realism in a London flat, a hero built like Sandow, and a tacked-on happy ending.

DESIRE *by Jean Fayard* (Century)
The love affair of a young Frenchman on military service with the easily won mistress of a famous English painter, based on the assumption that any experience, however trivial, is interesting in itself. The 1931 Goncourt Prize novel.

BEHIND THE DOOR OF DELUSION *by "Inmate—Ward 5"* (Macmillan)
Obviously a true story, disguised as semi-fiction, of a patient in a state psychopathic hospital. Intensely interesting as a document, less satisfactory as diversion.

WOMEN ARE QUEER *by Grace Sartwell Mason* (Appleton)
Very good short stories by an author whose imagination can always be counted on to carry her tales a step beyond their rather stereotyped form.

Mystery and Detective

THE DEATH OF MONSIEUR GALLET *by Georges Simenon* (COVICI-FRIEDE. $1.50)
From Paris comes the first of a series of Inspector Maigret stories. This worthy member of the Sûreté undertakes to solve the strange death of Emile Gallet in a small country hotel. Typically French in form and deductive reasoning.

THE SCOTLAND YARD BOOK OF EDGAR WALLACE (Doubleday, Doran)
Nine stories and one novelette containing over one thousand pages of England's most alluring mystery stories.

FIND THE MOTIVE *by Jack Woodford* (Long & Smith)
Leonard Buchanan, criminal lawyer and the spit of Clarence Darrow, is lethally knifed at his 80th birthday party. Among those present: his publisher, grandson, law associates, a cop, a coroner, reporters and assorted motives. In the end no one burns for murder, though the grandson is indicted and tried. Happily, the love borne him by a pure newsgal named Paula Termure has little to do with the case.

THE TRAGEDY OF Y *by Barnaby Ross* (Viking)
After York Hatter's body turns up in New York harbour and death makes further inroads on the "Mad Hatters", the D. A. hotfoots it to Mr. Drury Lane who a few months ago solved *The Tragedy of X*. Lane is a robust, stone-deaf retired actor who out-cerebrates all comers after the manner of Philo Vance but with none of Vance's orchidaceous affectations. Among the season's very best.

RE-ENTER SIR JOHN *by Clemence Dane and Helen Simpson* (Farrar & Rinehart)
The distinguished English actor-manager again turns detective. This time, to clear the name of his protegé, he is forced to uncover a long-forgotten scandal in Army affairs. A masterly bit of deductive work by two well-known authors.

DEAD MEN AT THE FOLLY *by John Rhode* (Dodd, Mead)
Inspector Hanslet of Scotland Yard and Dr. Priestley collaborate in the solution of the two murders at Tilling's Folly. These two men always provide most enjoyable entertainment. A Red Badge Mystery of distinction.

THE SERPENTINE MURDER *by Leonard R. Gribble* (Dodd, Mead)
Concerning the operation of Inspector Slade's department (X 2) of Scotland Yard and the murder of a well-known Greek theatre manager in Hyde Park. A triple murder mystery that all but frustrates the forces of law and order.

THE GALLOWS WAITS *by Jackson Budd* (Putnam)
Jerry Bligh, junior partner of a London firm of master stevedores, through a strange friendship, is drawn into a web of circumstances that all but sends him to the gallows. Recommended as an unusual drama in murder-mystery fiction.

THE GREEN KNIFE *by Anthony Wynne* (Lippincott)
Dr. Eustace Hailey solves the mystery of Sir Dyce Chalfont's murder. Again the intrepid doctor ventures into the valley of death to prove his case.

MURDER IN THE BASEMENT *by Anthony Berkeley* (Doubleday, Doran)
Chief-Inspector Moresby of the C.I.D. calls on author Roger Sheringham to explain how and why the body of Mary Waterhouse got buried in the basement of a house in a London suburb.

JENNY NEWSTEAD *by Marie Belloc Lowndes* (Putnam)
Another of Mrs. Lowndes's fictionalized murder cases, and one of the best. This tells the story of the surviving bride of the famous English "bath-tub murderer".

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AT A GLANCE

Biography

SIR WALTER SCOTT *by John Buchan* (COWARD-MCCANN. $3.75)

SCOTT has been dead just one hundred years and the centenary has brought forth even more than the anticipated number of revaluations. In the present volume Mr. Buchan has given us a closely detailed summary of Scott's life and accomplishment. The book is heavily factual, of orderly arrangement, and lays a strong stress on chronology (each page of the text carrying its corresponding date in the margin). Mr. Buchan's final estimates are quite orthodox and the significance of his book seems to rest chiefly in its convenient abridgement of Lockhart.

SAMUEL BUTLER: A MID-VICTORIAN MODERN *by Clara Gruening Stillman* (VIKING. $3.75)

THIS biography is singularly good. Mrs. Stillman has not only assembled a host of new and relevant material but has given us a very able analysis of their significance. It seems safe to predict that this book will succeed Mr. H. F. Jones's *Memoir* as the best treatment of Butler that we possess.

THE PENNS OF PENNSYLVANIA AND ENGLAND *by Arthur Pound* (MACMILLAN. $3.50)

FORMER books on this subject have been entirely concerned with or in some way dominated by William Penn, the Quaker. Mr. Pound's new book concerns itself rather with the Penn line. It begins with the father of the Quaker—with William Penn the Sailor, who rose to favour at the court of the Stuarts; shows how the son William managed to retain this favour in spite of making a nuisance of himself in religious matters; how he struggled to found his colony for religious freedom in the New World, how he succeeded, then how the colonists turned against him; finally how his descendants spent their lives vainly trying to maintain their grant, yielding step by step before the encroaching democracy. The book has interest both as a study of the times through which its story runs and as a biography of an important American family.

JOHN CLARE, A LIFE *by J. W. and Anne Tibble* (OXFORD. $3.75)

CRITICAL judgment on Clare has long been so confusing and contradictory that this definitive life will be welcome to everyone. The authors have gone to the best available sources, have corrected many of the prevailing errors, and have shown in all important details a very competent scholarship.

JULIUS CAESAR *by John Buchan* (APPLETON. $2.00)

FOR those to whom the name of Caesar recalls little but dreary struggles with the ablative absolute John Buchan's enthusiasm will create, as for others it will renew, the glamorous figure of a universal conqueror. Caesar's personal charm is generally admitted; Mr. Buchan conveys it, picturing him meanwhile as a very enlightened imperialist, opposed by an anarchy of bankrupt political forces. It is flagrant partisanship, of course, but after-events are the most effective of all partisans; and Caesar's empire lasted a long time.

MOZART *by Sacheverell Sitwell* (APPLETON. $2.00)

MOZART considered as the supreme musical genius of the rococo period. Mr. Sitwell gives the biographical facts, but dwells chiefly on influ-

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ences and atmosphere: the childhood association with courts; the architecture of the day; the studies in Italy and France; the aristocracy, with their cult of elegance, for whose pleasure he composed. Mr. Sitwell is persuasive and tactful, not pushing his parallelisms beyond one's patience and not overdoing his description of the works, though in the course of the little book he covers a surprising proportion of Mozart's tremendous output.

ADVENTURES IN LIVING *by Muriel Jaeger* (MORROW. $2.00)

THIS might have been a good book. The lives of five people are told as exemplifying various principles of life. They are: Cato the Stoic, St. Francis the Christian, Chesterfield the Man of the World, Thomas Day the Child of Nature, and George Sand the Free Woman. The epithets are the author's, and in them one fault of the book is immediately laid open: its superficiality. Much graver is her repeated insistence that the principles were failures. The book ought to have been interesting, and it isn't.

A COUNT IN THE FO'C'SLE *by Count Jean Louis D'Esque* (BRENTANO. $2.75)

DOUBTLESS there is some basis in fact for the Count's tall tales. He certainly must have spent time on the sea, for the unaided imagination could hardly conceive such an astounding narrative. But granting the bare facts, their adornment is carried to the point where the author takes rank with Baron Münchhausen and Trader Horn. He tells of mighty men and fighters, villainous captains and mates, and what with murder, mutiny, disease, and shipwreck, there is hardly time for the author to heave the dead over the rail. The high point of incredibility is reached when the small Count falls among nine "lust-hungry" cannibal virgins weighing between one-hundred-eighty and two hundred pounds apiece. What they do to him is something Captain Walter E. Traprock of parody fame should have observed. In writing this book the author has laid a square egg, to say the least, and on all six sides there is adventure, drama, and the jaws of death.

NUR MAHAL *by Harold Lamb* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.50)

NUR MAHAL, wife of the Mogul Jahangir, is important not only because she was one of the most powerful women in Oriental history, or because she broke the traditional seclusion of the harem; her greatest significance lies in her highly moral nature, her strong personality. At least that is what Harold Lamb would have us believe, and he re-creates the historical personality of Nur Mahal in a most convincing fashion. The result is a dramatic biography in which devotion to husband and to duty and unwavering enmity against a stepson who had shed his own brother's blood are the dominant motives. Mr. Lamb has sincerely tried to amass all available data—to the extent of having portions of Hafiz Khan translated for the first time.

THE CHEVALIER D'EON *by M. Coryn* (STOKES. $2.75)

A ROMANTICIZED fictional biography of the Chevalier d'Eon de Beaumont, secret agent of Louis XV, whose skill as a female impersonator was so great that his sex was widely disputed till his death. Misfortune and imprudence combined to make the masquerade permanent, and the last thirty years of his life he lived as "Mademoiselle". The story, told with great sympathy for the little man, will appeal to those who enjoy the romances of, for example, the Baroness Orczy, if they can forgive the total lack of a love story.

History

A PASSING AMERICA *by Cornelius Weygandt* (HOLT. $3.00)

CHESTNUT trees are gone with blight; brandied peaches are illegal; log cabins are now shipped out in quantity by Sears Roebuck; the martin and the coach-dog are no longer cherished; and antiquarians have begun to quarrel over covered bridges. By way of recalling such old-fashioned matters, Mr. Weygandt preserves in fine prose the whole flavour of the northern Appalachian countryside in his own life-time. An eminently

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sensible man, he neither moans nor fulminates; he does not argue a case, and although he luxuriates in his memories he takes pains to trace as many as he can of the threads of custom back to their widely varied origins. His book will appeal to the select few who care for the past.

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION *by Pierre Gaxotte* (SCRIBNER'S. $3.00)

"IF IT was the Americans who first established modern democracy, it was the French who made it a militant creed." Thus writes the translator, Professor W. A. Phillips, in his preface to this volume. The author himself is a traditionalist and his work is a "manifesto" of "the revolt against the principles and practice of representative democracy". The book does not give us the conventional grammar-school account of the French Revolution. It is well written and thoughtful and in France it has already passed through eighty-four editions.

Criticism

THE MAKING OF AMERICAN LITERATURE *by Thomas H. Dickinson* (CENTURY. $2.50)

DR. DICKINSON has prepared an exceptionally complete and convenient manual of American literature. Although its text runs to over seven hundred pages the book is of pocket size. The print is good and there are abundant illustrations. In every respect a useful *vade mecum* for both teacher and student.

THE ENGLISH POETIC MIND *by Charles Williams* (OXFORD. $2.50)

IT IS Mr. Williams's highly interesting thesis, which he illustrates by turning to the poetry of Shakespeare, Milton, and Wordsworth, that English genius approaches its maturity by three stages: exuberance and enjoyment of the gift of letters; a period of doubt, almost despair, as the inconsistencies of good and evil dawn on the individual poet; and a final stage in which it is apparent that the genius has transcended his confusion and reached a philosophical synthesis of the aspects of his world.

Mr. Williams proves his case—or at least many readers will concede that he proves it—not by retelling stale personal gossip about great men, but by abstracting material from their known work which reveals the three attitudes. Without the final synthesis, Mr. Williams holds, toward which each one must go in solitude, the full genius cannot flower. The book is immensely suggestive, and should be read by all students of literature as well as all lovers of poetry.

THE CRAFT OF WRITING *by Percy Marks* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $2.00)

AN excellent handbook for novices, which is just what it sets out to be. Mr. Marks gives most of his space to considerations of writing as a craft, but his remarks on writing as an art are well worth reading. He is full of heretical opinions about many of our most consistently over-rated authors; if it were for this alone, the book would be valuable.

Topics of the Day

NATIONALISM IN MODERN FINLAND *by J. H. Wuorinen* (COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS. $3.75)

THIS may be briefly described as a history of Finland since 1810. Finland became for the first time an autonomous constitutional state at the conclusion of the Russo-Swedish War of 1808-09, and since that date has undergone vicissitudes both varied and tortuous. Professor Wuorinen's account shows vividly how a spirit of nationalism can persist in spite of so many difficulties over so long a time.

NATIONALISM AND EDUCATION IN MODERN CHINA *by C. H. Peake* (COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS. $3.00)

THIS book belongs to the educational library not the political, and the duality of its title is plainly misleading. It is a survey of education in China

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from 1860 to 1930 and is well furnished with bibliography, notes, and appendices for those wishing more intimate acquaintance with the materials of the Chinese programme. An analysis of forty-eight textbooks in popular use between 1905 and 1929 is included.

KING FOOTBALL *by Reed Harris* (VANGUARD. $2.00)

YOUNG HARRIS, whose departure from Columbia College and the editorship of the campus daily was attended by such fuss, here becomes quite hysterical on the subject of college football. There is, no doubt, a case against overemphasized, commercialized sport; but it is not convincingly made in this welter of mixed metaphor and wild statement. One finds it difficult, for instance, to accept the statement that the trouble with the stock market is that what brains the leaders of finance have are too worn down for business by arguments over football, that mighty parasite which has gained by leaps and bounds since it first slipped into colleges.

Travel

ENGLISH SPRING *by Charles S. Brooks* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $3.00)

A LEISURELY narrative of a spring trip through southwest England, from Dorchester through Devon and Cornwall to Land's End and up to Somerset, ending at Bath in early April. For the enrichment of their book, Mary Seymour Brooks sketches harbours, streets and towers, while her husband re-reads Hardy, Malory, and other local poets, muses on historical and literary associations, and makes observations with the mellow Brooks flavour; and at rhythmic intervals comes a chapter-end refrain: "A double room with a fire".

TWENTY-FOUR VAGABOND TALES *by John Gibbons* (DUTTON. $2.00)

THAT we live surrounded by deadly perils is a truth that all of us very sensibly ignore. We take our prescriptions to the druggist without considering the possibility that he might make a mistake and kill instead of cure us. For we are also surrounded by long-tried safeguards. But the good of our souls demands that we should not take these securities too much for granted, nor, in our indolence, forget that the price of material and spiritual welfare is endless vigilance. This is the theme of Mr. Gibbons's little stories. He is a journalist of delightful temperament, ranging the world to please his Catholic audience.

GONE ABROAD *by Charles Graves* (DUTTON. $3.00)

THE author of—*And the Greeks* here writes very entertainingly of Germany and Belgium, giving as much space to night clubs and bars as to museums and art galleries. He travels swiftly and luxuriously in motor tempo, stopping at the best hotels, golfing, gambling lightly, and viewing sights and people with a discriminating, lively eye. He seems a nice young man.

SOUTH AMERICA: LIGHTS AND SHADOWS *by Kasimir Edschmid* (VIKING. $5.00)

OF the hundreds of travel books which have come from the presses in the past year no one of them has possessed more genuine charm and distinction than this volume on South America. Its author has received acceptance and acclaim of the soundest sort in Germany and this volume should prove for him the happiest of all introductions to American readers.

A PILGRIM ARTIST IN PALESTINE *by Peter F. Anson* (DUTTON. $2.50)

SCENES from the Holy Land as it appears today, including Bethlehem, Nazareth, the Lake of Genesareth, Gethsemane, and the Stations of the Cross. The drawings express with serene dignity the nobility of the land. The explanatory paragraphs, touching allusively on the history of each spot, give one, by their care in placing the artist's viewpoint, the feeling of being actually present on the pilgrimage.

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